

FREE

# Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk September 21, 2014

North & West Edition No 626

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### Delays to Dartford Crossing changes

Toll booths will stay for at least another month

## SCIENCE »

### Can comet unlock mysteries of life?

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## Why the power of a union is even more significant today

UNITY is a word which is so often derided - seen merely as unbearable compromise amid a society anxious of ruffling feathers or causing a commotion.

But the reality is that unity is the glue which keeps our communities - both at local and global levels - from fracturing into chaos.

You only have to look at how religious division continues to separate people who were once neighbours and sparks terrible conflicts. Or at how failure to adhere to organisations, created in order to ensure unity to prevent further wars, can so quickly create such volatile and bloody situations.

So while there may be a certain shrugging of shoulders down here in Kent at the decision of the Scottish people in their referendum vote, the division it has caused both north and south of the border may yet prove to be rather deviseive.



Editor **Chris Britcher**

After all, the impact of the referendum is likely to send cracks scorching right across the United Kingdom. While a difference of opinion is good for a healthy democracy, there remains power in a union and that is one we should always seek to achieve. Ripping away from countries or governments is more likely to have an isolating impact and breed often dangerous nationalist fervour. And against that we should be on guard.

Inside this weekend's paper, we take a look at how the horror in Syria and Iraq is having a hugely negative impact on Islam in this county - instilling fear for those who follow a faith which has been so terribly warped and exploited by violent thugs.

There's a lot of gloom in this world, but unity can shine a lot of light into the darkness. We should never forget that.

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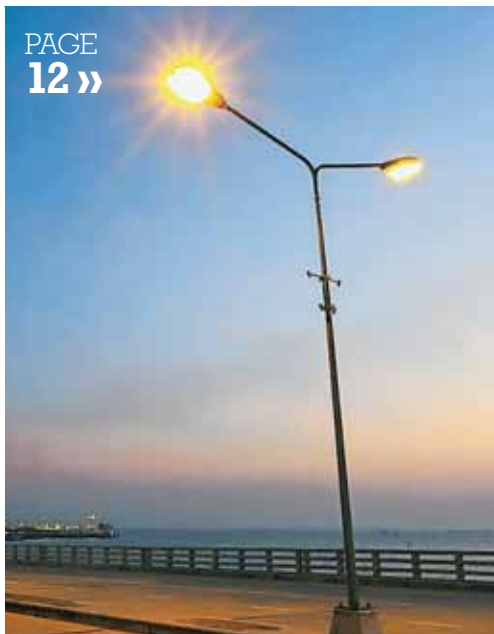
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Published in Kent and printed by Archant Print, division of Archant Community Media Limited (Co Reg No 19300). Registered Office: Prospect House, Rouen Road, Norwich NR1 1RE

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## Frustration at Dartford Crossing change delays

By Maria Chiorando

maria.chiorando@archant.co.uk

A DELAY to long-awaited plans to remove the toll booths at the Dartford Crossing is "disappointing" say transport chiefs.

The free-flow system is designed to ease congestion at the crossing. It was due to go live on October 28 after more than a year of highly publicised preparations.

Motorists using the crossing will no longer have to stop at tolls – instead a system of cameras will record all those using the tunnel or bridge.

The Dart Charge system will allow payment to be made online, by phone, by a pre-paid account or at various participating shops.

But on Friday afternoon the Highways Agency confirmed it would be delayed until the end of November.

It claimed it was to allow extensive testing on the system before it goes live.

The news will infuriate motorists who had been counting down the days for the changes.

However, the Freight Transport Association, which is based in Tunbridge Wells, was left upset at



**DELAYS:** Motorists will be left frustrated after a further delay to removing the dreaded Dartford tolls

the decision.

Malcolm Bingham, its head of road network management policy, said: "This is disappointing news.

"The costs of this hold-up are unacceptable to the freight industry.

"However, we need to be sure that the system will work, and it is therefore vital that they get it right.

"The FTA has and will continue to work with the Highways Agency to help get a resolution to this issue as soon as possible."

Highways Agency project leader Nigel Gray said: "Dart Charge is a massive change for drivers using the Dartford Crossing and it's only right that it is thoroughly tested before being introduced.

"We want to help drivers to be ready for the improvements we're making at the crossing.

"That's why we are saying Dart Charge will start during late November.

"We can reassure drivers that we'll give them plenty of notice

before the changes are introduced. They will have considerable time to sign up for a pre-pay account, which for most will be the easiest and cheapest way to pay the charge – with discounts of up to a third on every crossing."

Dartford's Conservative MP Gareth Johnson said: "This is frustrating but many major engineering projects can suffer from this sort of timetable slippage.

"The new free-flow system cannot come soon enough for me."

## Cops add cameras to their arsenal in fight to crack down on crime

POLICE officers in three areas of the county have started wearing state-of-the-art mounted cameras as part of a pilot project which is set to roll out across the force by the end of the year.

Teams in Maidstone, Medway and Thanet started to wear the Body Worn Video (BWV) on Wednesday.

The cameras will be used to help officers capture evidence from the scene of an incident and can record high-definition footage, take pictures and record sound.

Police chiefs say they will become a useful additional piece of equipment for officers in cracking down on crime.

In particular, it is hoped BWV will play a key role in domestic abuse offences and incidents in town centres at night.

In total, approximately 430 officers will be using the cameras by October 15.

This 'live test' phase will be prior to a wider roll-out across the force towards the end of the year and into 2015.

Deputy Chief Constable Paul Brandon said: "This is a technological innovation which has been shown to have some very clear and tangible benefits to police forces.

"It has the capability to capture real-time evidence, offering the potential to move the justice process forward with reduced stress for victims of crime.

"Forces who use BWV already have seen an increase in early guilty pleas as defendants are shown irrefutable evidence and they have seen a reduction in offending behaviour resulting in better safety for members of the public and officers.

"We owe it to the victims of crime to use all lawful investigative techniques available to us and BWV will become an invaluable asset for officers as they deliver a first class service to the people of Kent."

Kent police and crime commissioner Ann Barnes helped fund the introduction of BWV into the pilot areas.

## War of words erupts after lorry park announcement

A SITE just off the M20 at Westenhanger was this week confirmed as Kent County Council's preferred site for a new 300-space lorry park – sparking an angry response from Shepway District Council.

The proposed site is at junction 11, on land adjacent to the Stop24 services.

But Conservative district councillor Alan Clifton-Holt echoed the views of many at Shepway council.

He said: "We didn't know about the proposal until the last moment, and neither did the local MP.

"This isn't the way to go about things at all. We are extremely disappointed that KCC have taken this decision. There is a huge difference between proper consultation, and what KCC has done." KCC insists it followed the correct procedure and will hold further talks with the council.

## PCC Ann Barnes 'shaken' following car crash drama

POLICE and crime commissioner Ann Barnes has spent the week recovering after being involved in a car crash earlier this week.

The 69-year-old was left "shaken but not seriously injured" after her Mercedes reportedly crashed through a fence and hit a tree at around 3.30pm on Princes Road, Dartford, on Tuesday.

One other car was involved,

although no-one was seriously hurt and no arrests were made.

The commissioner did not want to comment about the crash, instead taking to Twitter the following day to say: "Would like to thank everyone for their good wishes. Very kind of you all. Not feeling too bright today, but OK."

Police say an investigation into the cause of the crash is on-going.



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## Water firm faces threat of £176 million penalty

SOUTHERN Water could face a financial penalty of £176 million for poor performance and customer service.

Regulator Ofwat is looking to hit the company with the largest financial penalty ever imposed on a water utility company after instances of flooding and sewage discharges.

Bathers have been repeatedly told to stay out of the water on Thanet's beaches after sewage has been

released from the Foreness Point pumping station into the sea.

An Ofwat spokesman said: "We have questions over how Southern Water have operated their sewerage network and treatment works."

Southern Water said: "Ofwat's concerns do not relate to impacts on public health or bathing water quality."

A final decision is due on December 12.



**STARS:** Oliver and James Phelps

## Minister flies in to voice support for Manston as CPO discussions continue

**By Maria Chiorando**

maria.chiorando@archant.co.uk

HOPES to resuscitate Manston Airport were given a boost this week, when Government minister Grant Shapps made a flying visit to the abandoned site to pledge support on Thursday.

But Ukip leader Nigel Farage, who will be standing in neighbouring South Thanet at the next General Election, declared the visit as "saying nothing and offering nothing".

The Conservative minister without portfolio, met around 100 campaigners at the airfield, which closed in May. It followed a takeover in November by business woman Ann Gloag. After key freight and passenger deals fell through, she pulled the plug and closed the site, putting 150 staff out of a job. She has since refused to sell the site - despite an offer meeting her asking price of £7m from US investment firm RiverOak.

More recently, fixtures and fittings at the airport were auctioned off.



**VISIT:** Grant Shapps & Iris Johnston

Now Thanet District Council is considering serving a Compulsory Purchase Order on the site.

Mr Shapps said: "I know Thanet council is quite small, I know it doesn't have endless resources, but it

has vision. It's right that local people are backed by central government and I hope that carries some weight.

"There are no specific plans for Manston.

"I haven't got a magic wand, we look to local areas to provide the leadership, and when they do, we look to support them.

"We think the vision is something worth backing. We will do everything we can to help."

Labour council leader Iris Johnston said: "I am delighted the minister has found time to come down to Thanet - he has been able to see the commitment and enthusiasm of local people."

The council continues to consider the legal and cost implications of such a CPO.

Ukip leader Nigel Farage, however, was less than enthused by the visit, pointing out it appeared to be words rather than action.

He told KoS: "Grant Shapps has said nothing and offered nothing, he has offered no reassurances for Manston Airport."

## All-star teams set for charity cricket match

A HOST of famous faces will be padding up for a star-studded celebrity cricket match in Canterbury later this month.

The popular Bunbury Cricket Club will face a Kent XI at the St Lawrence Ground in Old Dover Road on Sunday, September 28.

Among the big names set to appear are twins Oliver and James Phelps, best known for their roles as the Weasley twins in the Harry Potter films; Rupert Young who was in popular BBC drama Merlin; and Top Gear mystery racing driver The Stig. It is also hoped Emily Berrington, the actress whose credits include the Inbetweeners 2 and Outnumbered will also appear.

In addition, former professionals and Kent legends Chris and Graham Cowdrey will return to their old stomping ground to play alongside their sons, which include emerging Kent first team star Fabian.

The cancer charity Hope for Tomorrow will benefit from the event, with money going towards its mobile chemotherapy unit.

Entry to the ground is free - with VIP packages costing £75 allowing spectators to mingle with the players and enjoy a meal.

Gates open at noon, with the match getting under way at 2.30pm.

## Protest over housing plans spill onto street

CAMPAIGNERS battling a major new housing development near Maidstone took their fight on to the streets this week.

The villages of Lenham and Headcorn have joined forces to challenge plans to build some 1,745 houses over the next 20 years, as outlined in Maidstone Borough Council's Local Plan, which outlines development in the borough.

They claim such a proposal would forever alter the landscape of the existing villages.

More than 150 campaigners picketed a meeting of the local council on Wednesday. Inside, they presented petitions from both villages.

The Local Plan outlines the need for some 18,600 new houses. More than 2,000 responses were received when the plan was at consultation.

However, the council insists some tough decisions must be made to ease the housing crisis and sought to assure those concerned by promising suitable infrastructure would come with any development.

## Community event to remember WW1 dead

TICKETS went on sale this week for a major community event in Tunbridge Wells to mark the centenary of the First World War - and honour the 764 local heroes who died during the conflict.

The event takes place at the Royal Victoria Place shopping centre on October 6 between 7.30pm-9pm.

Called 'Poppy' it will feature a performance by the London Ballet Company, with monies raised going towards the Royal British Legion.

There will also be performances from several local schools and youth organisations as well as music from the TS Brilliant Sea Cadets band.

Organiser and centre marketing manager, Marc Burchett, said: "We want our event to be an uplifting commemorative event which showcases the talents and passion of our young community and demonstrates the importance of our past history and our future."

Limited tickets are available - and are on sale at the centre's concierge desk.

## VIPs mark key date for flood defences

A SPECIAL ceremony took place at Sandwich Quay on Friday to mark the completion of a key part of the town's £21 million tidal defence scheme.

MP Laura Sandys and Kent County Council's Mark Dance were among the VIPs attending the event to mark completion of work in the town centre.

Mrs Sandys unveiled a large anchor, discovered under the quay by constructors, which has been refurbished, as part of the ceremony.

The Sandwich Town Tidal Defence scheme is being delivered in partnership by the Environment Agency, Pfizer and Kent County Council.

Work on the rest of the scheme is continuing away from the town centre, and will be completed in spring 2015. When completed, the scheme will reduce the risk of tidal flooding to Sandwich and Stonar Loop.

Some areas of the town currently have a one in 20 chance of tidal flooding. The work should make it one in 200.



# Time is running out to put YOUR question to Kent PCC Ann Barnes



**QUESTION TIME:**  
Ann Barnes will open up to KoS readers

KENT on Sunday is giving our readers the chance to put their questions directly to Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner Ann Barnes.

Mrs Barnes has never strayed far from the headlines since she was elected to the post in November 2012.

And now you can put your questions directly to her – with no topic out of bounds.

In her role as the county's first ever crime commissioner, she is tasked with overseeing the chief constable and holding him to account in delivering policing across Kent, while also overseeing funding.

She has no say on operational matters – those decisions remain firmly with the chief constable.

But she is certainly influential within a force facing some of the most damaging cuts in recent history, and the public's continued fear of crime and desire to see more 'Bobbies on the beat'.

As an independent candidate, she has certainly managed to raise the awareness of

a position which has attracted many critics since being introduced by the Coalition to provide an individual accountable for the police force.

Since being elected, she's had some notable victories, including the establishment of a round-the-clock Sexual Assault Referral Centre in Maidstone, and has recently put pressure on the Prime Minister to stop the Kent taxpayer having to foot the bill for the renewal of fire arm licences.

Her two-year spell in charge has not been without incident, however.

Problems over the appointment of Paris Brown as her youth commissioner, and a misjudged Channel 4 documentary which set out to look at the role, but ended up making Mrs Barnes something of a figure of fun, has blotted her copy book.

One thing she has certainly achieved is to ensure the public know who she is and the role she holds.

As the previous high-on invisible head of the Kent Police Authority – which the office

of commissioner replaced – she has become a visible presence.

Now she has vowed to answer our readers openly and honestly.

All you need to do is email, tweet or write to us with your question. We'll then select the best and most probing and put them to Mrs Barnes in person.

All the responses will be published in a future edition of Kent on Sunday.

To put your question to Mrs Barnes, simply email [editorial@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:editorial@kosmedia.co.uk) and put in the subject line 'Ann Barnes Q&A'. Or, alternatively, email them to The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford

TN25 1PP. All questions must be received no later than noon on September 30. Alternatively, you can tweet your question to us on Twitter – see below for details.

## PUT YOUR QUESTION TO ANN BARNES...

- Email: [editorial@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:editorial@kosmedia.co.uk)
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Senior county council officials this week launched a 12-week consultation into plans to put the running of our libraries into the hands of a charitable trust. But what would be the impact? **Sarah Linney** reports

**F**ORMAL plans to hand over the running of the county's libraries, registration and archives service to a charitable trust have gone out to a public consultation this week.

Members of Kent County Council's growth, economic development and communities cabinet committee discussed the proposals at County Hall in Maidstone on Tuesday. The 12-week consultation period started then.

In what would be the biggest change to the county's library services, the move has come about as the latest phase in the authority's ongoing review of services in order to meet reduced funding from central government.

Should the proposal get the go-ahead, it will save the council more than half a million pounds.

The council will remain ultimately responsible for the service – its duty to provide a library, registration and archive service, giving everyone in Kent free access to books and computers and maintaining the historic archives, is enshrined in law under the Museums and Libraries Act.

It insists it will simply be relinquishing the day-to-day running and says it is not expecting to see any cuts.

If the charity fails in its mission, the council is obliged to find a replacement organisation – which could be a private company – or take the service back into its own hands.

But many will feel concerned about the future of a service still so cherished by so many.

And despite reassurances, once out of council control, the trust would be the one having to make key business decisions.

KCC cabinet member for community services, Mike Hill, said he perceived several advantages of the scheme, including the trust's ability to bid for charity funding and grants and the opportunity for ordinary people to get involved with its running by becoming trustees.

However, it is the £600,000-a-year savings that the council expects to make by no longer having to pay business rates that are clearly the most attractive part of the proposition.

"Suffolk County Council did this about two years ago and they are very pleased with the service they are getting and have saved £2 million a year. We would hope to emulate that model," Cllr Hill said.

He said there would be no cuts to services – at least not immediately.

"There will be no cuts. The service will transfer over and all the libraries and staff will be there – and the staff will have the same pay and conditions," he said.

"Into the future the trust will have to make its own arrangements. The staff will be their responsibility, and opening hours are a detail we haven't worked out yet, but they would have to come to us if they wanted to close a library."

He said that if the council continued to run the service itself, cuts would be a certainty.

"We are reviewing every single service. We have to find an enormous amount of money," Cllr Hill said.

"If we didn't do this, the only way we could make sensible savings would be by reducing staff or the number of libraries.

# KCC consultation could lead to new chapter in life of our library service



**DO IT YOUR-SHELF:** Now you have a chance to take part in the consultation over the future of our library service

"There has been very little opposition – I had one or two letters from people who were worried about it.

"Libraries are a hugely emotive issue and people are passionate about them, but I am equally passionate. We are all trying to achieve the same thing – the best for Kent's libraries."

Laura Swaffield, chair of the Library Campaign, a national charity

**“You’ve got to credit Kent County Council for trying to come up with a solution which will keep them open. It is better than what a lot of councils are doing”**

**Laura Swaffield,**  
chair of the Library Campaign

which promotes and supports libraries, agreed the changes were preferable to cuts.

"A lot of councils are seeking to get rid of their libraries and trying to close many of them," she said.

"You've got to give credit to Kent County Council for trying to come up with a solution which will keep them open.

"It is better than what a lot of councils are doing – reducing hours, outsourcing their libraries to commercial firms or making most of the staff volunteers.

"Whether this is a magic wand which will do the trick is another question."

**S**he said libraries were becoming increasingly important in a world where cuts were affecting every walk of life.

"Libraries are very important as a public space and they offer services that people badly need," Miss Swaffield said.

"Every library in the country offers internet access, which is crucial. People can search for jobs or sort out their pensions – and borrow e-books too.

"Libraries do a lot to help with education. Nearly all of them run reading clubs and toddler groups where young children learn to read.

"There are a lot more people looking for jobs now, and a lot more people who haven't got the money to buy the books they need for themselves and their children.

"With the bedroom tax we have a lot more crowded homes, and a library is a place where people can go which belongs to them, without having to pay."

She said that although the charitable trust model had been tried elsewhere in the country, it was still in its infancy.

"Charitable trusts are very much uncharted territory," Miss Swaffield said.

"One or two have failed completely, others are doing the job for the mo-

**“Across England there is massive growth in different ways of libraries being delivered, and I don’t believe it’s possible to say one way is right”**

**Mark Taylor,** from the  
Chartered Institute of Library  
and Information Professionals

ment, but it is all too new to know whether this makes the savings one might hope.

"It's a mystery why not, but these trusts don't have a record of getting loads of charity funding in, though they are getting better at it.

"And libraries are essential public services. It's a bit much to have them competing with all the other things that need charity money. We're robbing Peter to pay Paul – we will have hospitals bidding for charity funds next."

She said it was impossible to say whether the changes would lead to job losses.

"Whether they reduce staff is entirely up to the charity," Miss Swaffield said.

"We would argue that a library without a librarian is just a bunch of books and a few computers. Libraries depend on having expert staff who can help people.

"There is nothing in the charity way of running libraries that says we must cut staff and on the whole no, we have not seen that happen."

And she said that councils were in a difficult situation.

"We would argue that councils can make savings in all sorts of ways, for example with IT, or by sharing departments between them, such as legal departments," Miss Swaffield added.

"But councils are getting cut after cut after cut. It is shame to see them driven to this, but they have to do something. They can't run the things they used to run.

"The whole thing is unnecessary austerity enforced by a government that doesn't understand or care what it's doing."

**M**ark Taylor, director of external relations at the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, said he was open to any way of running libraries that worked.

"Across England there is massive growth in different ways of libraries being delivered, and I don't believe it's possible to say one way is right and one way is wrong," Mr Taylor said.

"You can get a bit too hung up on how a library is governed. What's most important is that people get the services they need.

"It's probably a bit early to tell whether it has been successful for other councils, because how do you define success? When you change a service you need to give it time to bed down.

"The devil is in the detail."

You can give your views online at [www.kent.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.kent.gov.uk/libraries) or by picking up a form at any Kent library.

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**UP, UP AND AWAY:** Danny Mercer controls his 'quad-copter' drone which allows him to take remarkable aerial images as these photos along the River Thames along north Kent demonstrate

# This magnificent man with his (small) flying machine

**T**HE word 'drone' most often conjures up menacing images of unmanned aircraft striking at military targets.

However, increasingly, these small, remote-controlled aircraft are being used for non-military purposes.

And, as demonstrated by one man, his drones are taking to the skies with a very different purpose in mind – providing a remarkable birds-eye view of the county.

Danny Mercer, 26, from Thamesmead, decided to build his very own 'quad-copter' drone after wanting to take to the skies to follow his father, who flies and works on aircraft.

But Mr Mercer decided while wanting to get up into the clouds – he wanted his feet firmly on terra firma.

He said: "I got into because I was interested in flying. I just thought it would be really interesting to build my own drone, so that I could get up into the sky too."

But his first flights with a shop-bought drone were less than successful.

After just a few attempts he had managed to crash it so badly the machine was no longer capable of flight.

He said: "It was a case of trying a few times. Getting up into the sky and then bringing the drone down safely and under control weren't easy to master, and I crashed my first drone so badly it no longer worked."

"But I was hooked on it, and decided it would be better to build my own drones from then on."

Danny Mercer has taken his love of aviation to a new level by designing and flying his own drones for a bird's-eye view of Kent, joining the growing band of enthusiasts who can reach for the skies while staying on terra firma. **Jamie Weir reports**

The drone which Mr Mercer uses currently is a 'quad-copter', which has four helicopter rotors on each corner of the aircraft. Moving these rotors controls the vehicle, allowing it to turn, go up and drop depending on the amount of power.

It flies them most often above Gravesend and then along the Thames.

"I've built quite a few drones now, and it's absolutely brilliant," he says.

"It is such a buzz getting up into the skies with the drone, and I get to view

the world from a completely different perspective.

"You have to be quite delicate flying the drones. It certainly isn't easy as you need to be really aware of your surroundings and just tweak the controls to move the drone around gently."

Mr Mercer uses a special headset to fly his machines. It displays a live video feed of his flight, allowing him to take control as though he were in a cockpit. It means he can see everything as he jets through the skies, and allows him to get up close to a number of things which many can't.

He said: "It's great fun. Last week I chased a cruise ship down the Thames, following it for a good couple of miles. It meant that I could fly along behind it, checking the ship out as it left the river."

"My drone has really good range as well. I can fly it up to two miles away from me before I lose transmission."

But with one eye on safety, even if Mr Mercer does lose his signal, the drone is programmed to return to the point it took off from and land safely.

He said: "It works perfectly. I can be making a cup of coffee and relaxing,

and the drone will just come straight back to where I have told it to, and land, without me having to lift a finger."

**A**nd the drone doesn't even need Mr Mercer to fly it. He can programme a set of points, called waymarkers, for the drone to fly to, before returning to where it started.

This allows Mr Mercer to simply sit and watch the flight on his video stream, sucking up the impressive images as he soars over the landscape below. But he needs to be careful where he flies it.

Mr Mercer said: "There are pretty strict regulations on where I can fly."

"UK law states that I'm not allowed to fly it within a certain distance of a crowd, or any large, built up areas. That means that I have to be pretty careful."

"There's a good reason for that law, as obviously you wouldn't want one of these falling out of the sky and hitting someone."

"There are fail-safe systems though, and these drones have been proven to be able to fly even when

they've lost a considerable amount of their rotors. They are incredibly safe, as long as people use them in a safe manner."

And as we see the rise in use of drones by the military, and also potentially by companies like Amazon, who have talked about delivering goods using drones, Mr Mercer says that there is growing interest.

He told KoS: "It's becoming incredibly popular to fly drones. There are racing drones which can speed along at up to 80mph; heavy lifting drones and professional drones which people use to take pictures and videos."

"And the great thing is that there is a type of drone for everyone's budget. It doesn't have to be really expensive, with basic shop-bought drones selling for around £80."

"Obviously there are far more expensive ones, with custom-built professional drones selling for anything up to £8,000 as well."

"It's such an interesting hobby. I find it really great getting up into the skies and I'm just so lucky getting to see things which most people never get the opportunity to see."

"They are the future. They can be used for so many things in the UK and throughout the world."

"Search and rescue, aid delivery and of course, delivery of goods to get trucks off the roads."

"I reckon that even the police helicopter could be replaced with drones in the future and that would mean a great saving for taxpayers' money."

**“ Last week I chased a cruise ship down the Thames, following it for a couple of miles. It meant I could fly behind it, checking the ship out as it left the river ”**

**Danny Mercer**, who builds and flies his own drones



**P**RESSURE is growing for Kent County Council to rethink its strategy to switch off street lights, amid mounting concerns for people's safety.

It comes ahead of a meeting in Gravesend where a 1,500-signature petition will be handed in to council chiefs at Gravesham Borough Council highlighting residents' concerns.

And those behind the campaign say they hope to extend it countywide in a bid to secure the 10,000 signatures which would trigger a debate at County Hall.

KCC has rolled out a two phase switch-off programme – with some lights being turned off completely, and others switched off during the early hours of the morning – in a bid to save millions on its energy bills (see box).

While it claims all switch-off areas are being closely monitored, many have expressed concerns over the darkness encouraging crime, promoting unease, and making it dangerous for those who work shifts.

The Gravesend Right to Light petition was launched by Tina Brooker, in a bid to get the street lights in her area switched back on after people attempted to break into her disabled neighbour's house.

"It was two weeks after the street lights went out," Ms Brooker explained. "She was terrified and had to hide in her wardrobe for three hours.

"If my neighbour's suffered this then other people must have suffered too.

"There are so many night workers – care workers, taxi drivers, hospital workers. Even if crime is not rising on their streets, their fear of crime is and people are feeling vulnerable."

It is a view echoed elsewhere, Labour councillor Alain Lewis, who represents High Brooms and Southborough on Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, says he continues to hear from concerned residents.

He explained: "People do feel genuinely unsafe. I keep having complaints from constituents."

Kent Police says it continues to monitor crime figures in the areas affected, but says it is too early to rely on statistics painting a clear picture quite yet.

Assistant Chief Constable Rob Price said: "We recognise the reasons why this project is under way and we are working closely with Kent County Council who have taken a careful and considered approach to reductions in street lighting.

"We are reviewing any evidence of links between the reductions and crime and anti-social behaviour.

"However, there has not yet been enough time for any conclusive evidence of a connection to be made.

"This will of course be kept under review and we will continue to work closely with Kent County Council on this issue."

Kent County Council, meanwhile, insists it is open to discussion on any concerns if a problem is apparent.

Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi, is a Gravesham councillor and Labour parliamentary candidate for the town in the next General Election.

He believes a show of public support for the Right to Light petition could finally see changes.

He said: "I think it's like going back to the dark ages. I appreciate they are having to make cuts due to the de-

# Petition shines light on growing concern over switching off of our street lights



## CASTING A LONG SHADOW

THE two phase project will switch off street lights either completely or between certain hours in areas across Kent.

Some areas will not be affected because they meet certain exclusion criteria.

Lights will not be switched off in town centres, areas with CCTV, antisocial behaviour areas, at busy road junctions, roundabouts or

sites with road safety issues.

Phase one involved around 2,500 selected street lights being switched off in areas where they would not have been installed if they were built today and where it is claimed there will be no negative effect on the surrounding area.

Phase two involved part night lighting, with some lights being turned off between midnight and

5.30am or 1am and 6.30am during summer time.

The 70,000 lights that have part night lighting installed make up about 60 per cent of those owned by Kent County Council.

The changes cost approximately £4.2m and will reduce energy costs by around £1 million each year, meaning that the costs will be recovered within four to five years.

see the foot path. I'm sure it's going to lead to injuries.

"It seems incredible, given we're in the 21st century.

"I am very hopeful that across the county other like minded individuals will sign the petition. It's the will of the people that should win the day."

The controversial scheme has caused much concern across the county since the year-long trial began earlier this year.

It hopes to reduce costs and carbon emissions by turning off 70,000 lights, plunging a number of rural and residential roads into darkness between midnight and 5.30am.

**K**CC has said that it has around 120,000 street lights and that the energy used to light them from 2014 to 2015 would cost £6.4 million, as well as producing 29,000 tonnes of carbon emissions.

A spokesperson explained: "We have to find an additional £273m of savings over the next three years.

"Switching off street lights when they are least needed will deliver an annual saving of around £1m. This will be used to support frontline services. It will also cut carbon emissions by 5,000 tonnes annually and reduce light pollution."

While the approach has been praised by The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the Institute of Advanced Motorists, individuals across the county have been stepping forward to express their concerns.

The county council insist it carried out a consultation process, which included advertising and publicity in local newspapers and on radio.

However Right to Light campaigner Ms Brooker believes that with only 546 people responding and 416 being in favour more should have been done to make people aware of the proposals.

"We should have been leafleted door to door for this, it's a key decision that affects everyone's safety," she said.

Gravesham Labour councillor Les Howes, who is managing the campaign, agreed.

"That's not democracy at all," he said.

"It's just madness. There are other ways to do it if there's got to be savings. There are intelligent ways to do it using better technologies, or just turn off every other light.

"LEDs, for example, are hugely more effective. They do not use any where near as much electricity. They are also a lot less problematic with maintenance as they last longer."

Tim Prater, Liberal Democrat parish councillor for Sandgate, has expressed concern about what the future holds as winter edges nearer.

"We are about to find out how dark some of these areas actually are," he said.

Mr Prater said that people in Folkestone had resisted and some of the proposed areas where lights would have been turned off had been allowed to keep them on, such as the A259 near Sandgate Hill.

"We got them taken out of the project 18 months ago. If they'd still been included in it I expect there would have been demonstrations at County Hall in Maidstone by now."

**■ What do you think? Is the switching off of some street lighting in the middle of the night causing you major problems? Or is it a sensible step? Share your views and join the debate. Write to: The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP. Or email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.**

crease in their national grant, but I think this is a basic service, a basic necessity and simply by cutting this service they will only save a small

amount of money in comparative terms, but it will have a huge impact in terms of health and safety.

"Many of the residents I have been

speaking to have been saying that they feel very scared.

"Many are having to use their phone as a torch as they can't even





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# Islamic State's Syrian brutality is destroying years of good work, fear local Muslim leaders

**Chris Murphy** speaks to Raschid Sohawon on the damage caused to the local Muslim community by the shock tactics of the fundamentalist group

**A** SENIOR Muslim leader says brutal atrocities carried out by Islamic State is setting back years of efforts to promote Islam as a peaceful, inclusive religion in the county.

Raschid Sohawon, president of the Canterbury Muslim Cultural Centre and the Muslim chaplain for the University of Kent, said he felt the recent gruesome coverage of the beheadings of British aid worker David Haines and two US journalists had damaged whatever progress had been made.

Mr Sohawon admitted: "I think we are fighting a losing battle. This is because we have tried so hard in this country to give people a good idea what Islam is about, that it is safe.

"We try very hard to build relationships with all communities. And then something happens abroad and it sets us 10 steps back.

"There is nothing in Islam about killing an innocent person. The rules of engagement is very clear; you are not allowed to kill anyone who is not in combat with you.

"The journalist and other workers are not in the equation; they are not in combat with anyone. Killing these people is a crime against all of humanity because it is outside of the religion."

He said the local Muslim community is in despair over the executions and other killings by the group calling itself Islamic State and previously known as both Isis (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) and Isil (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant).

Mr Sohawon said: "The Muslim community here are saddened this group is using the words Islamic State when they are not really applying Islam. There is no room for the killing of innocent people, killing innocent children and burning their homes.

"It is sad because we are trying so hard to build our relationships with all communities to show the good side of our faith, and yet things happen that have a bearing on the perception of the general public when they look at our faith.

"It is a matter of the few damaging the reputation of the many.

"And it's not just that - it is putting our com-

munity in fear of reprisal.

"When Muslims go to an airport they are checked out by two or three people. They have to do their job to ensure we are safe but it has a bearing on us, because we are at the forefront."

To fight back against the chances of radicalising any impressionable Kent teenagers who may be tempted to fight for such an organisation as Islamic State, Mr Sohawon recently turned down an application for three men from London to speak at his mosque.

He said he didn't want radical preachers to get a foothold anywhere in Kent.

**M**r Sohawon said fundamentalists can distort the image of Islam and is at pains to explain men dressed in black with their faces covered and brandishing weapons has nothing to do with his religion.


At the Canterbury Muslim Cultural Centre, he added: "We have to be very careful now with who we invite to give talks. Security is keeping a very close eye on all the mosques and all the universities.

"We are caught in the middle trying to do the right thing for the good of our students. We want to make sure our country is safe.

"It is a balancing act we have to do every day."


**“ There is no room for the killing of innocent people, killing innocent children and burning their homes. It is a matter of the few damaging the reputation of the many... and putting our community in fear of reprisal. ”**

**Raschid Sohawon**, president of the Canterbury Muslim Cultural Centre



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**HIDDEN AGENDA:** The vast majority of Muslims are appalled by the actions of the Islamic State



## No ground troops but measures must be taken, say MPs

LAST year, the House of Commons voted against military strikes on Syria. It has dictated UK involvement in conflicts in the Middle East ever since.

Yet there is a growing sense that military action may be required, in cooperation with our allies, if the threat posed to the region by Islamic State is to be brought under control.

In particular, the issue of putting troops on the ground.

However, the spectre of Tony Blair's decision to team up with George W Bush to invade Iraq continues to provide a reminder to all politicians that reputations can be demolished on one decision.

While air strikes have not been completely ruled out in 10 Downing Street, the prospect of soldiers being deployed remains highly unlikely.

Ashford MP and senior Conservative Damian Green says the threat can be tackled by other methods first.

He said: "We will only defeat Isis through a comprehensive and sustained counter-terrorism strategy.

"We must support the direct military action being taken by the United States.

"This is not about British combat troops on the ground. It is about working with others to extinguish this terrorist threat."

The call for military action stepped up when a second British hostage, refugee aid worker Alan Henning was threatened with execution.

While on a charity mission in Ethiopia, North Thanet Conservative MP Roger Gale took a hardline approach.

He said: "I support, in this instance, the PM's approach. No boots on the ground but supportive air strikes – preferably with UN approval – in Iraq and, provided that they are correctly targeted, in Syria if necessary.

"It is a hard call but this is an evil that has nothing to do with Islam and as to be eradicated in the global interest."

A NEW BREED OF JIHADISTS – PAGE 16 »

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## CHANGING PSYCHOLOGY OF NEW BREED OF JIHADI TROOPS

DR Simon Cottee is a criminologist at the University of Kent, and he likens the men of Islamic State with the gangsters of old.

Dr Cottee said: "The 'badass' is still with us, only now he doesn't have a gangster face; now he has a jihadi face.

"For the ultimate 'badasses' are the caliphate-invoking, kafir-hating, sword-wielding men in black of Islamic State.

"This is in no way to glamorise the group. But it may be the key to understanding why some young men from the West give up everything to join it or affiliated groups."

Writing for the Los Angeles Times, the academic said: "In countless 'selfies' you can see these young men proudly posing in military apparel with guns at the ready.

"There are loving, close-up shots of personal hardware, including a chrome AK-47 with the caption 'Rolling wit d chrome homey'. These jihadis seem more like frustrated high school actors, desperate for attention, than bona fide badasses.

"Who, really, are these young men? We still know dismayingly little about them. But we do know something about the jihadi groups they are joining.

"Despite the divisions and fractures within their ranks, their goal is to seize political power. They want to establish an Islamic



**STATE OF MIND:** Isis currently control part of Iraq after the attacks

state or, more ambitiously, a caliphate incorporating many Muslim-majority states.

"And for all their ideological differences, these groups are united in what they're against:

America, Jews, apostates, gays, women's rights, religious freedom, materialism, free speech, secular

democracy, alcohol, pork and on and on.

"We also know something about what these groups demand of their members: discipline, physical courage, piety, murderous violence and self-immolation.

"Many had come from the lower strata of society, and significantly, at least a quarter had a criminal record. Almost all were male and most were 'born again' Muslims, discovering religion later in life.

"It may be that the western Europeans who reportedly represent up to 18 per cent of the 11,000 foreign fighters in Syria share similar backgrounds. What little we do know, from news reports and social media, seems to confirm this.

"The attractions of jihadi groups to such men are clear. They directly answer to what is existentially missing from their lives: a sense of identity, belonging and purpose."

Dr Cottee said the message from these terror groups is often the same: "Join us and purge yourself of your sins. Join us and become a hero to your people. Join us and guarantee your place in paradise".

He adds: "This has a special resonance for gang members with a guilt complex, which perhaps explains why so many Western jihadis are former gang members and why Islamic State is directly targeting this group in its recruitment videos."



**A MAJOR CONCERN:** Aid worker Alan Henning is currently held by Isis

## World gripped with fear over fate of UK hostage

THE family of Alan Henning will be experiencing a peculiar type of hell as they wait to learn his fate.

The aid worker is a hostage of the Islamic State extremists who have used brutal videos of beheading other hostages, uploaded to the internet, to spread a sense of terror it is keen to cultivate – as well as to attract new recruits.

Earlier this week it appeared any hopes of a rescue mission were ruled out, after the defence secretary Philip Hammond admitted they did

not know where he was being held.

Mr Henning, a 47-year-old former taxi driver from Salford, Manchester, was seized just 30 minutes after entering Syria as part of a aid mission.

On Thursday night it emerged another British hostage was being held by IS.

Freelance journalist John Cantlie appeared in a video clip apparently reading a script from an autocue in a departure from previous clips released by the terrorists.



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**MISTAKES:** Kent and Canterbury Hospital, part of the East Kent Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust – found to be ‘unsatisfactory’ following an inspection by the Care Quality Commission

# Just why are so many of our key hospitals in a poor state of health?

With two of the county’s health trust hitting the headlines for failures in their standards of care, **Sarah Linney** looks at what measures are now being taken to ensure this doesn’t happen again

**R**ECENT headlines have not made happy reading for health provision in the county – shaking the confidence of many in the quality of care we expect to receive from our hospitals.

Two of the health trusts set up to run some of the county’s hospitals have fallen foul of sometimes damning reports from inspectors which have demanded immediate steps be taken to improve services.

First the Medway NHS Foundation Trust was found to have “major failings” as part of the Keogh Review which studied hospitals with high mortality rates.

It operates the busy Medway Maritime Hospital in Gillingham.

Since the findings in 2013, it has undergone a major shake-up and seen much of its senior management team resign.

Just this week, health minister Jeremy Hunt paid a visit to hear from chief executive Dr Philip Barnes, im-

provements may take between two to five years to be resolved.

Then, earlier this year, the East Kent Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust, which runs the William Harvey in Ashford, the QEOM in Margate and the Kent and Canterbury, as well as hospitals in Dover and Folkestone, denounced as “unsatisfactory” by the Care Quality Commission.

Its job is to inspect health facilities to ensure they meet national standards.

Both trusts are now in what is known as ‘special measures’ – an intensive improvement programme aimed at bringing them up to scratch under the watchful gaze of Monitor, which regulates the health sector.

But what does this actually involve – and is the picture in Kent really as bad as it looks?

Out of around 150 trusts so far inspected in England, 28 are listed as being subject to enforcement action – which means they are deemed not to meet standards – and nine are in special measures.

With 48 counties in England, two trusts in special measures in the same county is certainly higher than average.

And Monitor says the situation in Kent is not good, and that the seriousness of being placed in special measures should not be underestimated.

A spokesman for Monitor said: “Being in special measures means you are in a fairly ignominious club of trusts which have serious problems with patient safety. That’s a very significant finding and we want to see improvements very quickly.”

Trusts which go into special measures will work with an improvement director appointed by Monitor who will oversee the necessary changes, offering expertise and support as well as making sure improvements happen.

They will also have to publish monthly updates of the changes they are making on the NHS Choices website.

Medway is already being mentored by Homerton Hospital in Hackney. Similar help may be offered to East Kent.

The spokesman said he understood the difficulties trusts faced in, for example, recruiting clinical staff or dealing with the number of patients coming to accident and emergency departments, but said this was not an excuse for compromising care.

“The NHS faces significant challenges across the country and difficulties in recruiting clinical staff are common, but the organisation still has a responsibility to maintain safe staffing levels, or to make sure patients get seen quickly enough in A&E,” he added.

“We make no apology for holding them to account for that, but we recognise those problems exist and we will be working with the trust to help them try to deal with them. It’s not a case of just punishing the trust – it’s being given extra support.

“There is nothing that we are saying that would point the finger at frontline staff.”

## East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust

THE trust realised it needed more nurses as far back as November and has now almost spent the £2.9 million it set aside to recruit them, deputy chief executive and chief nurse Julie Pearce explained.

A national shortage of nurses has made this a difficult task but she said that more than three quarters of the 69 nurses the trust needs have now been recruited, with the rest soon to follow.

"We are also looking at how many staff we need in A&E, because demand is so much higher than it was six to eight months ago," Mrs Pearce said.

"But then we have to recruit, and that will be the challenge as there is a supply issue and it will take time. We can't just put an advert out and get hundreds of people applying for the job – and the people who apply may not have A&E experience so we may need to develop people into those roles."

The trust has also recruited four general surgeons, with another three to follow, and appointed paediatrically trained nurses to care for children in A&E.

Other concerns raised by the CQC included out-of-date equipment – all of which has been replaced, and had in fact been earmarked for replacement before the inspection – and delays with outpatient appointments, which the trust will deal with by extending clinic hours for longer on weekdays and into Saturdays.

## SOLVING THE PROBLEMS



Mrs Pearce said the trust would also be talking to GPs and health bosses to work out why it had seen an increase in patients coming to A&E.

"At the moment we are seeing about 94 per cent of patients in A&E within four hours – the standard is 95 per cent," she said.

"But some patients don't need to come to A&E and we are trying to find out why – for example, because they can't get an appointment with their GP, or didn't try to."

She said the trust was planning to have GPs at the hospitals for patients to see to ease the strain on the department.

But she said there was a wider

problem with patients spending unnecessary time in hospital because of failings elsewhere in the system.

"Over the last few years, our hospitals have got busier, and more patients are coming in than we can cope with," Mrs Pearce said.

"Probably 20 to 30 per cent of people could be dealt with elsewhere in the system.

"For example, an older person with a urine infection may not need to be treated in hospital.

"They probably could be treated just as well at home or in a community bed.

"We need to do more to make sure that if a person doesn't need to come to hospital, there is capacity

outside of hospital to deal with them. For example, some patients are not able to get a GP appointment."

She said that the healthcare system as a whole in Kent needed to be far more co-ordinated.

"We don't always join up our services in an integrated way and there are certain things that are quite immature about the whole system," Mrs Pearce added.

"It's becoming more difficult for patients with complex needs to transfer their care to services outside hospitals in a timely way.

"Part of this is that there have been budget cuts in social services and there is a lack of nursing home beds, but it is not one or two things,

it's a whole systematic, complicated scenario.

"Sometimes we need a whole system to approach these things and do things differently, and I don't feel that the innovations have necessarily been there. It's who takes responsibility for some of these things."

### Medway Foundation Trust

WITH a new chair – Shena Winning – a new head of A&E and an improvement director to oversee the changes, acting chief executive Phil Barnes believes that Medway NHS Foundation Trust is finally on the right path.

The trust has been in special measures for 14 months, with an inspection in April finding that it had made "inadequate progress".

The hospital's A&E department was heavily criticised by the Care Quality Commission inspectors, but



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is receiving more support from senior doctors and nurses and has improved its triage system, which had resulted in some patients not being seen quickly enough, Mr Barnes said.

It has been teamed up with Homerton Hospital in Hackney to help get it back on track.

"Homerton Hospital is known for having a very effective emergency department and their senior doctors and nurses are working alongside ours two days a week," Mr Barnes said.

"We made the changes to the triage system over the last weekend in August and they said there was noticeably better safety after that. As soon as someone comes in they are seen by a senior nurse within 15 minutes."

Another problem has been patients who have had operations spending too much time in the

recovery area waiting for a bed on a ward.

As part of the solution, consultants are now doing more ward rounds at weekends to allow more patients to be discharged then.

"There is limited space in the recovery area so if it is full they can't be getting on with the next operation," Mr Barnes explained.

"We would discharge far fewer patients on Saturdays and Sundays, and the hospital then becomes bunched up, and becomes more difficult to get patients from the emergency department into the rest of the hospital."

The hospital is also trying to make sure it has adequate numbers of junior doctors on duty.

"Most hospitals have issues around the number of junior medical staff," Mr Barnes said.

"We are trying to make sure we are using our junior doctors wisely.

"We may need to recruit but it is also about rostering carefully – you might have three doctors on during the day when there's only work for two. We are using a new IT system for our roster and we have already seen some benefits."

He said part of the solution to Medway's problems lay in learning from other hospital trusts.

"I am determined to make sure that staff in Medway realise that there is a world outside," Mr Barnes added. "Trusts that tend to be rather isolated and inward looking are more likely to have problems."

"There is a big job to do, but I have every faith and expectation that we will get out of special measures."

# General practice being left to pick up pieces of government cutbacks

CHRONIC underfunding in the NHS means hospitals are bound to be unable to cope, a former GP has said.

"The Government is making £20 billion of cuts to the health service budget," retired GP Paul Hobday, from Maidstone, said.

"Departments are probably lacking because they have had their resources cut to the bone."

He said that the special measures tag did not mean a hospital did not provide good care.

"It is insulting to a huge number of very hard-working staff, because they get tarred with the brush of being incompetent or dangerous," Dr Hobday said.

"But when a hospital is in special measures they are only picking out one or two criticisms – maybe one



**WORRY:** Retired Dr Paul Hobday

unit which is low staffed.

"Our hospitals are still pretty good. All they need is a bit more investment instead of the cuts they are getting, then they would be very good, but that doesn't suit the Government.

"They want to get rid of quite a lot

of hospitals. Ten years ago they were saying there were four or five hospitals in Kent that we didn't need and which had to go," Dr Hobday added.

"But we haven't got too many hospitals. We have a lower bed ratio per patient than pretty much the whole of Europe.

"The only way they really can get away with it is to butter the public up, to say 'this hospital has to go, it's dangerous'.

"They want to bung things on general practice because it's cheaper, but they are starving general practice as well. The whole system will implode.

"What they are trying to do is totally unsustainable."

Dr Hobday is standing for the National Health Action Party at the General Election in Maidstone.

## Action might prove to be blessing in disguise

THE shock of being put into special measures might finally mean the East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust sorts its problems out, according to one campaigner.

Betty Renz says the decision to make only the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford a trauma unit – where patients with multiple head and limb injuries are taken – has left people in Thanet too far from potentially life-saving care.

National guidance is that everyone should be within 45 minutes of a trauma centre, but Mrs Renz says the distance from Thanet to Ashford is further than that.

She said: "It comes as no surprise that the trust has been put into special measures.

"In fact I welcome it.

"We in Thanet Action for Trauma Emergencies [a campaign group set up in 2011] have been telling the

Care Quality Commission that emergency care for Thanet is inadequate and has been for the last two and a half years.

"Let us hope that the CQC insists that the trust employs more staff in all areas.

"The doctors and nurses are not to blame for the inadequacies."

Mrs Renz, 82, added: "It's ridiculous. They are not doing right by us."

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# Could comet unlock secret of



**TERRAIN:** Scientist's have discovered different regions make up the comet

**Chris Murphy** spoke to Dr Steve Lowry, from the University of Kent, part of the European Space Agency team involved in a mission to land a probe on a comet hurtling through space

**A** SCIENTIST involved in the space mission to be the first to land a probe on a comet has spoken of his delight at the success, so far, of the breathtaking mission.

The European Space Agency launched the Rosetta spacecraft more than 10 years ago to follow the path of a speeding comet – known as 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko – with a view to landing on it.

And this week, the agency confirmed it had identified an area on the comet upon which it intends to attempt to land a probe on November 11. Scientists hope what they find could unlock the mystery of how life began on Earth.

The spacecraft has sent back remarkable images using its OSIRIS scientific imaging system, which has captured cliffs, depressions, craters and boulders on the comet's surface.

Dr Stephen Lowry, from the University of Kent's centre for astrophysics and planetary science, is part of the team behind the OSIRIS system.

He explained: "Each new image from OSIRIS is a unique close-up glimpse of the surface of a comet in

unprecedented detail, which we can use to help us to understand how comets form. Part of that process is to map the surface and define all its distinctive regions.

"There is still plenty of work to do though as the spacecraft continues to escort the comet on its long journey towards the Sun, a journey which grows more exciting each day."

The Rosetta spacecraft has already studied the make-up of the comet's 'tail' as it races through space.

67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko is moving towards the Sun at speeds of around 55,000km per hour, while Rosetta is orbiting it around 30km away.

Scientists have found the debris contains all the elements of life-making amino acids – the very building blocks of key biological processes. They have also detected methane, methanol, CO<sub>2</sub>, ammonia and water.

Having analysed the first images of the comet's surface taken by OSIRIS, they have discovered that far from being the same all over, it is actually several distinct regions.

Each of these are defined by special morphological characteristics.

The European Space Agency confirmed in Paris on Monday that it had

identified its primary and back-up landing sites, from a provisional short-list of five.

However, the task is by no means simple now the probe is so close.

The comet is just four kilometres wide and the terrain treacherous, making any landing difficult.

"Originally, we were all thinking that we'd get to some rounded, potato-shaped come," said Rosetta mission manager Fred Jansen.

Experts estimate the chances of a successful landing being around 70-75 per cent.

Rosetta is a European Space Agency (ESA) mission with contributions from its member states and NASA.

Only when the lander finally touches down in November can real progress be made to see if Earth could have been 'seeded' by a comet as the planet passed through a tail collecting all these vital proteins.

Gerhard Schwehm, of the European Space Agency, said: "We know amino acids and other complex organic molecules occur in space, so the question is how they were delivered to the planet's surface.

"Comets could have done that and so helped to kick-start life."



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# how life on Earth first began?



**ROCKY ROAD AHEAD:** The Rosetta spacecraft has sent back some remarkable images of the surface of comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko which is travelling at 55,000 kilometres per hour

## BLAST FROM THE PAST GIVES DIRECTION TO FUTURE OF SPACE EXPLORATION

FOR those with long memories, when Halley's Comet – perhaps the most famous of all celestial bodies – could last be seen in our skies back in 1986, scientists were determined to get a closer look.

Among the probes launched to study the comet which had been swinging its way through the universe for centuries (it is famously depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry of the Battle of Hastings in

1066) was Giotto – a high-profile mission by the European Space Agency.

It flew through the comet's tail and sent back a host of valuable scientific data.

It would inspire a new wave of missions to unlock the secret of comets.

Among the projects was one spearheaded by the European Space Agency and which has seen

thousands of scientists and experts involved.

Launched on March 2, 2004, on an Ariane 5 space rocket, the Rosetta mission – named after the famous Rosetta Stone which deciphered the mystery of the hieroglyphics used in ancient Egypt, as scientists hope it will unlock the secret of comets – it has already travelled more than 10 billion kilometres before its

rendezvous with the comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko.

In doing so it has been the first to orbit a comet. Its mission now is to launch a probe, the Philae, to land on its surface.

"There's no time to lose, but now that we're closer to the comet, continued science and mapping operations will help us improve the analysis of the primary and backup landing sites," says Rosetta flight

director Andrea Accomazzo.

"Of course, we cannot predict the activity of the comet between now and landing, and on landing day itself.

"A sudden increase in activity could affect the position of Rosetta in its orbit at the moment of deployment and in turn the exact location where Philae will land, and that's what makes this a risky operation."

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IPSO launched on back of Leveson Inquiry to promote confidence in standards of the media

**T**HIS month has seen a new dawn in the relationship between Kent on Sunday and its readers with the launch of the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO).

Chaired by a former high court judge, Sir Alan Moses, IPSO has been set up to regulate the British press in the wake of the Leveson Inquiry.

Virtually the whole of the newspaper industry has agreed to sign up to the regulatory framework IPSO has laid out, with one simple intention: to ensure that where readers have a complaint against a newspaper or its website they will be dealt with fairly, promptly and that appropriate action is taken when the paper is at fault.

This reform became a pressing necessity after the shocking revelations about how a tiny minority of journalists hacked into 'phones, bribed officials and carried out intolerable invasions of privacy.

This behaviour shocked the nation and led to the closure of the News of the World and the jailing of several journalists.

But while laws have long existed to prosecute those who intercept phone calls or bribe people, it was clear newspapers had to take additional, decisive action to reassure people that if there was malpractice there would be consequences.

So how will IPSO help to restore that trust and faith in the press?

Well, to begin with, we can be fined up to £1 million if the regulator considers we are responsible for systematic breaches of the code of practice we have signed up to.

It is a contract Kent on Sunday willingly agreed to. If our journalists step outside the parameters of ethical behaviour then we will face the sanctions laid down by IPSO.

If someone complains and we are unable to resolve their issue satisfactorily and the regulator tells us we are in the wrong then it will tell us what to do, when to do it and, if an apology is required, where it is published.

And remember, this is no agreement cooked up by an old boys' club of journalists looking to protect their own and preserve the status quo. IPSO is completely independent of newspapers.

While there are people with professional experience in journalism on the board – to ensure that its decisions are credible and workable in a rapidly changing, highly competitive industry – no serving editors are allowed to be part of the organisation.

We are confident this launch of an independent regulator means readers can have real confidence that when we get it wrong we will be held to account. That has to be good news.

*If you have a complaint which can't be resolved by Kent on Sunday editor Chris Britcher (chris.britcher@archant.co.uk) please contact the Independent Press Standards Organisation, c/o Halton House, 20-23 Holborn, London, EC1 2JD, or via complaints@ipso.co.uk. More information about IPSO and its regulations can be found at [www.ipso.co.uk](http://www.ipso.co.uk)*



# Classes exceeding regulation size due to education funding cutbacks

By Sarah Linney  
sarah.linney@archant.co.uk

**S**CHOOL places in Kent are facing the squeeze after the Government slashed £5 million from the county's education funding for the next two years.

And in some areas of the county, the cracks have already started to show with schools being asked to exceed class size guidelines.

Kent County Council has been given between £13-14m for extra school places from 2015 to 2017 – down from the £18-19m allocated for 2013 to 2015.

Roger Gough, KCC's cabinet member for education, is warning that it just won't be enough. "The funding does not match our sense of what in reality is going to be needed," he said.

"There is £300m still to be allocated and we feel we have a good case for getting our fair share of that."

He says that finding the savings will be far from easy – and could end up costing the council more in the long term.

He said: "We would probably have to look at every possible option in terms of doing things more cheaply."

"For example converting another room in a school into a classroom, or using mobiles – which are not ideal, but one can always make the best of these things."

"Temporary expansions would enable us to deliver the places without busting the budget."

"But we will probably end up having to spend more in the long run as if we build in temporary capacity, then permanent capacity, we are doing it twice. We would rather just build in the capacity that we need."

It is not the first time that problems with school places have made headlines in the county.

In April, when primary school places were allocated, 796 children in Kent – as well as more than 100 in Medway – were not awarded a place at any of the three schools their parents had asked for.

At the start of this month, after an influx of families into this district over the summer, headteachers in Gravesham were sent a letter, by KCC, asking them to take extra pupils – even if it sent them over the maximum number of pupils they are supposed to take, known as their published admission numbers (PAN).

The last Labour government banned schools from having more than 30 children in an infant class (reception plus Year 1 and 2), other than in exceptional circumstances and for one year only, but the Coalition has made it possible in practice for schools to break this limit for several years running.

"As you are all aware there is a shortage of school places in the area, especially in Years 1, 2 and 3," the letter said.

"We currently have a list of 23 children in the Gravesham area (nine children in Dartford) who are without a school place. These children need a place as a matter of urgency."

"While we fully appreciate that going over PAN may place additional pressures on your school, we would appreciate your assistance in this matter."

Kevin Shovelton, KCC's director of education planning and access, said that all the children referred to had now been allocated a place.

"We have seen unprecedented growth in demand in Gravesend due to recent increases in inward migration from London and beyond," he said.

And Mr Gough said the council would be opening six new schools next September, across Kent, and adding an extra form of entry to oth-



**LESSON NOT LEARNT:** KCC's Roger Gough

ers in order to provide relief.

"We have an obligation to provide a school place for every child and we have discharged that quite comfortably this year," he said.

"In the summer, we had around 800 surplus places across the county in reception, which is about five per cent surplus capacity and the number of places we said we'd deliver."

"We did know of children coming into the system, but because of further migration into the county, that ended up higher than forecast and we ended up with seven out of 12 districts below our target of a five per cent surplus."

"There is no absolute shortage of places, but there are some pressures in particular areas, such as parts of Gravesham."

"There are always elements which can be unpredictable; for example, the Thanet population is quite mobile and we get a lot of chopping and changing."

"Most of our forecasts have turned out to be accurate within one per cent or so."

"But I wouldn't deny that we are in quite a difficult position – the pressures are there and are not going away in a hurry."

However, Peter Read, who advises on school admissions and appeals through his consultancy Kent Independent Education Advice, said the situation was serious.

"They are living dangerously."

"If they force schools to go over their admission numbers, do you admit one extra child, two or three extra or four extra children?"

Other parents are going to complain.

"It is grim for parents. We have a far more mobile population here, with a lot of people moving down from London into west Kent, and parents are desperately trying to avoid poor and failing schools."

"There is a nationwide problem – and the government is not making the funds available to meet it – and Kent has belatedly started to address it."

But he said the problems were not the fault of those in charge now.

"They are doing their best, but they are starting from a very difficult position that has been bequeathed to the people now in charge."

"Past decisions have caused awful problems," Mr Read said.

"Historically Kent has failed to provide school places where they were needed. They have not planned strategically."

"They are not fully prepared for the mess that we are now in, and unfortunately government policy on academies and free schools now means KCC isn't in control of the process."

**M**edway Council's portfolio holder for children's services, Mike O'Brien, said he did not think the authority would have a similar problem.

"Budgets are being cut and none of us like it."

"We would welcome more money and we hope the government will see fit to allocate it – I am pleased Roger has raised the issue."

"We are taking steps to ensure we have enough primary school places over the next few years and we are confident we will be okay. But who knows what the future holds?"

■ For more education stories and more from Peter Read on the school places situation, see our special supplement inside today's paper.

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Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity. Registered charity no. 235825.

# Phones4U staff are left hanging as high street favourite collapses

Mobile phone retailer's stores shut after major phone networks fail to renew contracts, leaving many facing the dole queue and possibly another gaping hole to fill in many town shopping centres



**SHUTTING UP SHOP:** Phones4U shops closed as of Monday after it went into administration

She's looking forward to seeing you

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**Allied Healthcare**

**Y**ET another hole appears to have been blasted into our high streets after Phones 4U dramatically slumped into administration on Monday.

The mobile phone retailer has dozens of branches across the county, including Tunbridge Wells, Gravesend, Maidstone, Ashford, Canterbury, Westwood Cross and Gillingham.

All stores employed around 10 staff – all face the prospect of spending this weekend looking for a new job.

Nationally, the company has around 720 outlets, employing more than 5,500 jobs.

The only ray of hope has been suggestions some of the major phone networks may acquire some of the stores – although the numbers of stores being discussed, at the time of going to press, were just a fraction of those at risk.

Remarkably, its collapse comes after delivering multimillion-pound profits last year and with a turnover of more than £1 billion.

But it had big debts and all unravelled after the major phone providers all failed to renew contracts with the outlet, all preferring, instead, to sell directly to the customer.

Vodafone pulled out earlier this month, and when EE failed to renew last week too it meant disaster. O2 and Three had already opted out.

Owned by private equity firm BC Partners, it will prove difficult for administrators – PwC – to put it on an even keel given its core business has now disintegrated.

David Kassler, chief executive of Phones 4U said: "If the mobile network operators decline to supply us, we do not have a business. A good company making profits of more than £100 million, employing thousands of decent people has been forced into administration."

The news first emerged last Sunday.

All staff were told to report to work as normal on Monday morning although stores remained closed.

It is understood money existed in the brand to ensure payments could continue to staff up to this weekend.

Rival firm Carphone Warehouse said it would look to offer job vacancies to Phones 4U staff.

BC Partners executive Stefano Quadrio Curzio said: "Vodafone has acted in exactly the opposite way to what they had consistently indicated to the management of Phones 4U over more than six months."

"Their behaviour appears to have been designed to inflict the maximum damage to their partner of 15 years, giving Phones 4U no time to develop commercial alternatives."

Vodafone denied any wrong-doing. A spokesman said: "Phones 4U was offered repeated opportunities to propose competitive distribution terms to enable us to conclude a new agreement, but was unable to do so on terms which were commercially viable for Vodafone in the current UK market conditions."

Calls to the local branches went unanswered earlier this week.

## RISE AND FALL OF A GIANT...

PHONES 4U was a pioneer of the remarkable boom in the use of mobile phones.

Formed in 1986 by John Caudwell, it rode the wave of interest in the new technology initially as a wholesale distributor.

Turnover in 1991 was £13 million; by 2000 it was £1 billion.

Phones 4U established itself as the biggest independent phone dealer.

By 2003, the Caudwell Group employed more than 8,000 people worldwide and was selling 26 phones every minute.

When the market started to settle by 2006, Mr Caudwell was one step ahead

again – selling his group of companies in a deal which netted him £1.2bn.

The company was sold again, this time to BC Partners, in 2011 for £700m.

It marketed itself ruthlessly, on TV and across newspapers and magazines. Only last year it signed a five-year naming rights deal with the Manchester Arena.

The venue says its collapse will have no impact on upcoming shows and that no name change will be implemented just yet.

But it was reliant on deals with the major mobile networks. When they fell through, it effectively pulled the rug from beneath the feet of Phones 4U.





The issue of primary school places just won't go away

SEE PAGE 35 »



Apprenticeship scheme giving young chance of job for life

SEE PAGE 40 »



Tips on how your child can really maximise their gap year

SEE PAGE 43 »



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Autumn edition

PULL-OUT  
SUPPLEMENT

## So just how do you secure the secondary school of your choice?

By Peter Read

[editorial@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:editorial@kosmedia.co.uk)

**B**Y the end of October, some 20,000 families in Kent and Medway will need to have made their choice of secondary school for their children.

Kent allows an additional week of grace because of the half-term immediately preceding the national cut-off date of Friday, October 31.

In Kent you have up to four choices of school, and in Medway six, with overall about 97 per cent of families getting one of their choices and about 83 per cent their first choice.

Here I look at some of the factors around those choices for both non-selective and grammar schools and provide some general advice. It is very difficult to address specific issues in such an article as

circumstances change considerably between towns and areas and individual family circumstances such as distance from schools, scores in the selection tests or religious affiliation vary widely.

The first piece of advice is that you should always list your schools on the application form according to your preferences as the method of allocation means there is no tactical way to improve your chances by trying a different order.

Too many schools are still falsely advising that you can improve your chances of gaining a place at their school by putting them first and if you don't you won't be considered. Completely untrue!

The simplest way of explaining the process of allocation is that the child will be awarded a place at the highest school on their list for which they are eligible according to the school's admission rules (yes, I know

it still sounds complicated!).

Schools are never told at what position on the application form they have been placed by an individual family during the admission process, so they are unable to take this into account when allocating places.

As indicated above, around five out of every six children get their first-choice school so, if you are confident you fall into this category, you can relax. However, this still leaves more than 3,000 children who won't and many more who will worry about not being offered their first choice, so this article is written for them.

There is a pile of information around to assist in your choices and finding out your chances of success. The secondary school admission booklets issued by Kent and Medway councils and available online

Continued on page 29 »



**LEADING LADY:** Siobhan Kelly is the first-ever woman president of the University of Roehampton's Students' Union

### Siobhan is head of the union

A FOLKESTONE woman has become the first-ever woman president of the University of Roehampton's Students' Union.

Siobhan Kelly, 22, who completed her GCSE exams at The Folkestone School for Girls before taking A-levels at Brockhill Park Performing Arts College in Saltwood, has just taken up her new position.

She is pledging to improve student representation and increase links between 'town and gown' through volunteering schemes.

Siobhan graduated this summer with a degree in sport and

exercise science and will head the union for the next 12 months.

She is now encouraging pupils in Folkestone to look at the courses Roehampton offers when considering their degree options.

Siobhan said: "I've had a great time at Roehampton, which is why I'm pleased to be able to stay on and lead the students' union."

"It's an honour to be the first-ever woman president."

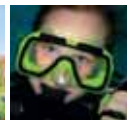
During her 12 months in office, Siobhan will be responsible for ensuring the student voice is heard and representing students on committees, including the university's senate and its council.

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## « Continued from page 27

(Medway's is already out) are a good starting point, with a section on each school, setting out its admission rules and how many children were awarded places last year.

If the school of your choice had vacancies then you are very likely to offered a place this year.

The Ofsted website, or that of the school, will lead you to the most recent inspection report, although you will also find a summary on my website [www.kentadvice.co.uk](http://www.kentadvice.co.uk).

The Department for Education website will lead you to a wide range of performance statistics, enabling you to compare each school with others in the county.

However, don't just look at the highest scorers – results depend greatly on the ability of the intake and so the 'improvement' tables are also a good guide.

My website has further information on each school, including an indication of the number of children turned away, if any, over the past few years. You will find this in the section called Individual Schools. Searches on this website for particular schools will often produce more detailed information and comment.

Other parents are of course also a guide, especially those with children at the school. However, beware of 'urban myth' as false tales can spread rapidly about individual schools.

One very good grammar is regularly unfairly pilloried by status-obsessed parents seeking to justify their choice of more prestigious schools. It can take just one bad year for a school to lose its reputation but five or more to recover it, there being many examples of this.

Then there are the open days and prospectus. Remember the school is selling itself, sometimes just to the type of student it wishes to attract. However, a visit to the school is

essential if only to catch the ethos, see how students present themselves and watch how staff react with prospective students.

So, you have now worked out which schools you want for your child. Now to determine if they are likely to get a place.

The first step is to look at the school's admission rules that decide who gets places if too many children have applied to the school. The majority of schools, including grammars, will place a priority on distance from home to school.

However, many other factors can come into play. Eight grammar schools out of the 38 give priority to highest scorers in the Kent or Medway Tests to all or some of their entrants who have passed the test.

The cut-off score is not known until March 2, 2015, National Place Offer Day.

Cut-offs have changed sharply over the last few years (my website provides them!) but, with the Kent Test having changed format this year, are even more impossible to predict with confidence.

**However, beware of 'urban myth' as false tales can rapidly spread about individual schools**

Most church schools give priority to some or all children who come from a faith background.

Each church school has its own rules and these differ widely, so check carefully. I once got into trouble for frivolously suggesting children should be baptised into both the CofE and the Catholic Church!

It is advisable to find out which categories of children were offered places previously as a guide, but this

can of course change from year to year.

There is also a wide range of other priorities applied by some schools such as preference for siblings, scores in a test to admit a proportion of children in some non-selective schools; talent in a particular field like sport, music, other performing arts; children from named primary schools or catchment areas; or children of staff.

Some schools will use random selection from children allocated to several bands of ability by a test to ensure a mixed ability spread.

All schools will give a priority to children who are or have been in local authority care (far too few take this option up to get into a good school, rather than their nearest).

There is also a high priority for children who have a medical or social need to go to a specified school (this is difficult to prove and will require medical evidence).

More than half of those who took the Kent or Medway grammar school tests will be unsuccessful. If this applies to you, do you list one or more grammar schools so that, after you're turned down, you can appeal?

More than 40 per cent of grammar school appeals are successful, but this includes appeals by children who have passed the test but been turned down because the school is full. Appeal success rates vary widely from school to school and year to year.

For 2013 entry, the range was from 0 per cent to 89 per cent success rate (for non-selective schools it was very similar).

I am often asked what test scores are likely to be successful in a grammar school appeal.

This is an impossible question to answer as appeal panels will wish to take other factors into account.

These may include: what special circumstances do you have that will

convince a panel there has been a miscarriage (there is no point in producing peripheral issues); what alternative evidence do you have to demonstrate that your child is of grammar school ability; is the school oversubscribed or does it need additional pupils; is the school 'superselective'; is it in east Kent or west Kent; what support is forthcoming from the primary school; does your child have Special

**There is also a high priority for children who have a particular medical or social need**

Education Needs?

You are most unlikely to achieve success at a grammar school appeal if no score is above the cut-off. Expectations for oversubscribed grammar schools can be far higher than if there are vacancies.

Two of the most significant factors that parents can put forward are: 1) Is there information not seen before that affected performance, eg medical condition or family circumstances not reported that affected the child's performance but can be demonstrated 2) Independent proof that your child is of grammar school ability.

You may also succeed if these do not apply but marks are near the cut-off and you find a sympathetic appeal panel. If none of the above applies, your chances are low, so plan an alternative route for your child's secondary education.

For Medway grammar schools there is an additional stage in grammar school selection in which parents can get involved. When test results are sent out on October 3, if the child has been unsuccessful,

parents can apply for a review of the child's work over the next week.

This can be a stressful time for parents as if the review is unsuccessful some grammar schools will not give a full appeal hearing, focusing instead on whether the review was fair.

As a result, in some cases it is best not to go to review. The issues here are fully explained on my website.

A further obstacle to successful appeal in Medway is that schools are sent full information by Medway Council from the application form for appellants. Most schools pass this on to the appeal panels. This includes the order in which you have placed the school and any information you have given about why you have chosen particular schools.

In almost all cases, my advice for applications is don't provide reasons for choosing a particular school.

It cannot be taken into account unless it relates to health reasons, in which case you need to add in medical evidence. Where you wish to be considered under a particular priority, such as church commitment, the school will supply a supplementary form. If you don't fill this in, you won't be considered for that category of application.

However, my first and last piece of advice is 'Don't panic'. There is no advantage in getting your form in early. Seek advice, talk with your primary school head-teacher (but don't always agree with them!)... I find Kent County Council admissions department is almost always very helpful, while I run an admissions advice telephone consultation line.

All systems try to give priority to parental preferences, but sadly not all can be met. This article has looked at possible issues for those who find decision-making difficult but, as I began: five out of every six families will get their first-choice secondary school.

That is good news for most.



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With so many people moving into Kent, the pressure to find places for growing numbers of young children in the county shows no sign of abating. Here independent education analyst **Peter Read** gives his views on a problem that he says could have been addressed earlier.

**T**HERE has been much comment in the national media on the growing shortage of primary school places... and Kent is no exception.

I am now receiving concerned enquiries almost daily from families who have moved into or are planning to move into the area and finding no suitable school, or in some cases no school at all, being offered.

Others have been allocated schools they didn't apply to and are now finding out the reasons for the lack of popularity of some of these.

Key pressure areas are Sevenoaks, Gravesham, Dartford, Tunbridge Wells, Thanet, Maidstone and Tonbridge in Kent, along with much of Medway, especially Chatham, Rainham and Rochester.

You will find further details about each of these at my website [www.kentadvice.co.uk](http://www.kentadvice.co.uk).

The problems of what are called In Year Transfers are exemplified by an email circulated to primary school head-teachers in Gravesham at the beginning of September by the local authority desperately seeking places for 23 children in the borough (nine in Dartford) in Years 1, 2 and 3 without a place.

I believe many of Kent's problems were created in previous years when resources were available but primary places were not seen as the priority and I have written extensively about those failures from 2009 onwards.

However, the past few years have seen a much greater and concerted effort to plan and create new places.

In 2012 Kent County Council drew up a commissioning plan that outlined a strategy for creating the 10,000 new places needed in the county by 2016.

I wrote at the time: "I believe this is an essential document; it is just regrettable that when it was proposed in 2009, on the back of warnings about school place shortages, no action was taken, resulting in some of the temporary fixes we have seen in the past two years".

Unfortunately, the plan, creaking at the seams, is now out of date as shown by the examples below and a

**Schools are having to be expanded far beyond Kent's own recommendation of two forms of entry**

draft update for 2015-19 has just been published. I am not aware that Medway has such a plan.

This positive initiative by KCC is in spite of local authorities having now lost the power to build schools, being able only to commission new academies, voluntary-aided schools and Free Schools to set up schools outside KCC control.

Both versions of the commissioning plan also include some "over-arching principles" to guide its decision-making, of which more later.

As a result, schools are having to be expanded far beyond Kent's own



# Primary school places: it's a tough issue that simply won't go away

recommendation of two forms of entry, reducing "the efficient deployment of resources" in KCC's words. In other words, undermining the quality of education on offer.

Some of the current pressures come from families moving into Kent or Medway, often from London, and by returning expatriates, who are attracted by the 'good grammar schools' available.

They are frequently horrified

when I explain that the problems of securing a good, or indeed any, primary school place are likely to be the major issue for some.

Others come through inward migration from other parts of the UK and from abroad.

It is evident KCC sometimes tackles short-term problems by enlarging primary classes to more than 30 children without the need for an appeal (this is not a criticism!).

Indeed, I heard this week of one family living in rural west Kent where this has happened because siblings were going to be separated by a wide geographical split.

However, this is a very difficult tactic to adopt for infant classes.

Infant class legislation prohibits class sizes of more than 30 for Years R, 1 and 2 where there is only one

**Continued on page 34 »**





Whether young students are distracted by members of the opposite sex or they gain a broader perspective on life, opinions are varied about the benefits or otherwise of differing approaches to teaching our schoolchildren

# So, single-sex or mixed education? The question with no easy answer

THE debate about whether single-sex or mixed schools are better for children's education is a long-standing one and parents deciding on a secondary for their child may be asking themselves this question.

Carolyn Jackson, education researcher, said: "The arguments about single-sex and co-educational schools are generally around four key issues, academic attainment, curriculum and subject choice, children's experiences of school and preparation for life."

Advocates of single-sex education

believe these schools help students to focus on their studies and not get distracted by the opposite sex, as well as enabling them to make their own decisions about which subjects to choose that aren't based on gender stereotypes.

For example, more girls may choose science and maths subjects in single-sex schools and more boys may not feel embarrassed about studying art in an all-boys environment.

Advocates of mixed schools argue that schools should reflect real life where boys and girls learn to



work and live together, where both sexes can benefit from the other's perspectives.

Ms Jackson added: "Evidence suggests there is no significant difference between students who attend single-sex and co-educational

schools in terms of how easy or difficult they find it to adjust to university life.

"Overall the debate is complex and there is no easy or straightforward answer to the question: which is better, single-sex or co-ed schools?"

Perhaps parents, then, should not be asking themselves whether single-sex or mixed is best, but which school is best for their child. There are many outstanding single-sex and mixed schools in Britain, state and independent, and some terrible ones.



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# New sports centre is just one of the success stories at Ashford School

ASHFORD School's new sports centre has been officially opened by Olympic gold-medallist Lizzy Yarnold.

Nestled in the banks near the River Stour, the centre boasts a Sports England size hall as well as changing facilities for home and away teams, offices for the sports staff and a social room with a balcony over the school's AstroTurf.

Lizzy spent time with the students as well as answering their questions in a special Q&A session, proving a real inspiration to the school's aspiring athletes.

Lizzy has a string of accolades to her name, including 2014 Olympic champion in the women's skeleton bobs, 2013-14 World Cup champion, 2012 junior world champion and 2012 and 2013 FIBT World

Championship medallist.

It was a busy summer for Ashford School's drama pupils who performed at the Edinburgh Fringe.

Together, they wrote and produced a play especially for the festival and spent the first week of August in Scotland.

"This is almost unique among performers of their age and is doubly impressive as they wrote this historical drama themselves," said head Mike Buchanan, who travelled to Edinburgh to watch the cast.

"The writing is beautifully authentic 1940s American English and the script is well researched."

The play is set in a claustrophobic and intense sitting-room party on the eve of Dalton Trumbo's appearance at the Committee for un-American Activities.



**NORTH AND SOUTH:** Ashford School pupils travelled to the Edinburgh Fringe to display their theatrical talents

This is the second year that Ashford School's theatre company, 8PB, have performed at the festival. Last year they were given a four-star review by one of the critics.

At Ashford School, students and staff are given every opportunity to extend their learning and to satisfy their natural curiosities and the chance to perform at the festival is part of this.

A team of inspectors picked up on the buzzing school ethos when they visited in March and declared

Ashford School excellent or outstanding in every one of the 15 categories.

The results of the inspection testify that Ashford School offers an outstanding education in which "pupils are excellent learners who enjoy their work" and "pupils make excellent progress".

The inspection report comments further that "pupils' creativity is exceptional" and that "teaching fosters higher-level thinking and application, enabling pupils to

progress rapidly."

The programme of more than 80 co-curricular activities is judged outstanding; the careers guidance in the senior school is exceptional; and pupils show excellent moral awareness.

In fact the school is eagerly awaiting the outcome of this year's Independent School Awards, having been nominated in two categories, for outstanding leadership and outstanding strategic initiative... see [www.fisawards.co.uk](http://www.fisawards.co.uk).

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**KEEP ON RUNNING:** Primary school can be among the happiest of times, but analyst Peter Read believes that too many children are now not being given a realistic chance of a good education

## « Continued from page 31

full-time equivalent teacher, apart from some very exceptional cases.

The relevant exception states that among the children who can be excepted are “children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance”.

The issue here is the interpretation of “reasonable”, with no guidance as to what this means.

Sometimes a case will go to appeal and very occasionally an Independent Appeal Panel will decide in favour of the child.

However, for entry in 2014, just five out of 535 appeals where infant class legislation is relevant were upheld.

KCC has interpreted “reasonable” several times in the interests of individual children, in areas of greatest pressure, for example in the Holborough Lakes area north-west of Maidstone.

Here, several additional infants have been added to take classes of more than 30 at nearby Snodland and St Katherine's Primaries. Holborough Lakes is a major housing development of 1,250 homes, 500 of which were already occupied in the summer of 2013.

**A** KCC Impact Assessment of July 2013 explains that a new one-form entry primary academy (sponsored by Valley Invicta Academies Trust) will be opened in September 2015, by which time there would be insufficient spaces in the two existing schools.

Unfortunately, there appears no assessment of where the additional children without schools should go between 2013 and 2015! I have talked with several families who have given up hope of a local school and gone private until the new school opens.

At least one Holborough Lakes child has been offered a place at Burham Primary, only 1.7 miles as the crow flies but, with the River Medway proving a bit of an obstacle, 9.6 miles by road.

KCC has also commissioned other new-build primary academies in an attempt to meet demand, each with a unit catering for children with disabilities, at Folkestone, Kings Hill, Leybourne and Sheppey.

For one family of a Year 1 child in a rural village near Gravesham, there was no concession for reasonableness this summer and the child was offered a place in an Ofsted failing school on the other side of town, 7.9 miles away by road. As there was no public transport, KCC offered to provide a taxi.

I advised the family to fight this and it may well be that a place has been created more locally for this child, but what about others who meekly believe there is no alternative to the offer?

There were just two vacancies in Reception classes in the whole of urban Gravesham on allocation of places in April, with another 12 vacancies in the far south of the district at Vigo Primary.

This in spite of the expansion of Chantry Primary Academy, from one to two forms of entry (recently out of special measures).

Kings Farm Primary, which has had well-publicised issues, has also been expanded again.

Almost 10 per cent of the 1,339 children offered places at Gravesham primaries have been allocated to schools they did not apply to, almost half of these to two very unpopular schools, one in special measures.

As I live in Gravesham, I have been approached directly by parents whose children have been allocated to these two schools, several planning to refuse to take up their places.

Others are remaining in nursery schools for up to another year, in the

hope (I suspect vainly) that a more suitable place will come up.

I well remember having a blazing row with the area education officer some years ago in the presence of the Cabinet member, warning of the coming problems – a warning that was ignored.

He also decided against the opportunity to have a new school built in Northfleet, with developers funding, on the grounds that it might draw children from another school (Ofsted failed) that then had to be expanded.

The new commissioning plan records: “Forecasts for Gravesham show sharply rising birth rate and birth numbers from 2002 to 2012”. Too late!

**The reality is that pressure on places is such that more and more schools are pressured to expand**

There is much better news in Thanet, where a new Free School (working title the Ramsgate Free School) is planned to open in 2015, initially admitting up to 60 children into each of Years R and 3.

This appears to be an imaginative and proper use of the Free School concept in a district where there is a severe shortage of primary places and is to be sponsored by Chilton Primary School, currently a community school under the control of KCC. The two schools will be led by the head-teacher of the heavily oversubscribed Chilton.

Meanwhile, in Broadstairs, in another imaginative move to ease pressures, St George's Church of England Foundation School has opened a consultation on extending its age range from the current secondary provision to include a

two-form entry primary section from September 2016.

There are just four schools with vacancies in the district, all with a history of under-performance, so these initiatives are likely to prove popular with parents.

Medway Council is still haunted by its decision to close Ridge Meadow Primary School in Chatham in 2010 although a fall in pupil population was on the turn and rising, with subsequent need to find additional primary school places in the district.

This year, 76 of the total 79 Chatham Reception Class vacancies occurred in a new academy being built with a capacity of 90 Reception places to alleviate the pressures.

Elsewhere in Medway, in Rainham there were no vacancies whatever, while in Rochester all 17 vacancies occurred in one failing school.

Of course, there has been subsequent movement and only this week I heard of one child being offered a place at a popular school.

**E**lsewhere one can find problems in Tonbridge, which had no vacant spaces in any of its Reception classes; Sevenoaks, with just 10 places available in two of its 27 schools, both in the rural west of the district (but here the situation will have eased as a number of families choose private schools if they haven't been allocated the schools of their choice); and Dartford, with no vacancies at all in the western half of the district and town.

Under this intense pressure on places, the over-arching principles laid down by KCC to determine where new primary school places are to be sited, while laudable, appear unrealistic. They include:

- We will always put the needs of the learners first.
- Every child should have access to a local good or outstanding school, which is appropriate to their needs.

- All education provision in Kent should be rated “good” or better, and be financially efficient and viable.
- We will aim to meet the needs and aspirations of parents and the local community.
- We will promote parental preference.
- If a provision is considered or found to be inadequate by Ofsted, we will seek to commission alternative provision where we and the local community believe this to be the quickest route to provide high-quality provision.
- In areas of high surplus capacity we will take action to reduce such surplus.
- One further planning priority worthy of note:
- Over time we have concluded that 2fe provision (420 places) is preferred in terms of efficient deployment of resources.

The reality is that pressure on places is such that more and more schools are being pressured to expand from this ideal of two forms of entry to three and even four forms of entry so, presumably, the efficient deployment of resources on offer in these over-large schools is declining.

I can only see the situation with regard to primary-school provision in Kent and Medway deteriorate in spite of the efforts of the councils to keep up with demand and feel so sorry for those families whose children started school last week in schools that are a severe disappointment to them.

A child only has one realistic chance of a good education and too many are now, I believe, not being given that chance.

■ See the main body of this newspaper for the response of both Medway Council and Kent County Council to Peter Read's views on primary-school provision.



## Rainham Mark Grammar School



Pump Lane, Gillingham, Kent, ME8 7AJ  
Headteacher: Simon Decker, M.Sc. M.Sc. (Ed)  
Tel: 01634 364151, Fax: 01634 260209

Website: [www.rainhammark.com](http://www.rainhammark.com)  
Email: [office@rmgs.org.uk](mailto:office@rmgs.org.uk)



### OPEN EVENING

Thursday 9 October, 5 pm - 7 pm  
Headteacher's Talk at 6.30 pm



### OPEN MORNING

Saturday 11 October, 10 am - 12 noon  
Headteacher's Talk at 11.30 am

Come and meet our staff, students and governors. We offer excellent teaching with a broad, balanced and flexible curriculum including accelerated learning where appropriate, in a caring and supporting environment. Come and view our facilities including the new sports hall.



**"Outstanding in all areas" OFSTED  
JUNE 2014**

If you would like to visit the school after our Open Days, tours will take place from Monday 13 October to Friday 17 October inclusive, from 9.00 am to 3.00 pm. Please contact the school office to make an appointment.



Visit our school website for further information about RMGS



Aspire, Excel

Come and hear all about our academy on the following dates:

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2014  
8:45am - 10:00am  
5:00pm - 7:00pm

**Open Mornings (Wed)**  
Arrival any time between 8:45am and 10:00am, the Principal will speak at 9:40am

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2014  
10:00am - 12:00pm

**Open Morning (Sat)**  
Arrival any time between 10:00am and 11:30am, the Principal will speak at 11:00am

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014  
8:45am - 10:00am

**Open Evening (Wed)**  
Arrival any time between 5:00pm and 6:30pm, the Principal will speak at 6:00pm

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2014  
8:45am - 10:00am

[www.theebbsfleetacademy.kent.sch.uk](http://www.theebbsfleetacademy.kent.sch.uk)  
[www.facebook.com/theebbsfleetacademy](https://www.facebook.com/theebbsfleetacademy)  
[@ebbsfleetAcad](https://twitter.com/ebbsfleetAcad)



**"The school is a close-knit, orderly and harmonious community. Students feel safe, cared for and valued as individuals."**

**Ofsted 2012**

- ☑ Exciting and enhanced learning opportunities
- ☑ A creative and innovative culture
- ☑ Motivated and successful students
- ☑ Excellent examination results
- ☑ An emotionally intelligent school environment
- ☑ Strong links with our local community
- ☑ Active international partnerships, building true global citizens
- ☑ Environmentally aware, recognised by the Green Flag Award
- ☑ Specialist Technology College
- ☑ Recognised for excellence in Sport and the Arts

Visit our state-of-the-art facilities and meet our highly-qualified and dedicated team at one of the following times:

**Wednesday 24 September — 6.00 pm to 8.00 pm**

**Thursday 25 September — 10.00 am to 12 noon**

**Thursday 16 October — 6.00 pm to 8.00 pm**

**Friday 17 October — 10.00 am to 12 noon**

Headteacher presentations are at 10.50 am, 6.00 pm and 7.00 pm



*Learning is at the heart of what we do*

Deal Road, Sandwich, Kent CT13 0FA  
Tel: 01304 610000  
Web: [www.sandwich-tech.kent.sch.uk](http://www.sandwich-tech.kent.sch.uk)



**SEE HERE:** There's no better place to learn than in the workplace with experienced staff



# Apprenticeship... a real job and more

From engineering to financial advice, veterinary nursing to accountancy, a huge range of industries is covered

AN APPRENTICESHIP is a real job with training so you can earn while you learn and get recognised qualifications as you go.

If you live in England, are over 16 and not in full-time education, you can apply.

They take between one and four years to complete and cover 1,200 job roles, in a range of industries, from engineering to financial advice, veterinary nursing to accountancy.

An apprentice works alongside experienced staff, gains job-specific skills, earns a wage and studies towards a related qualification (usually one day a week).

## Levels of apprenticeship

There are three levels in England:

- **Intermediate** – equivalent to five GCSE passes
- **Advanced** – equivalent to two A-level passes
- **Higher** – lead to NVQ Level 4 and above or a Foundation Degree

## Qualifications

Apprenticeships can lead to:

- National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) at Level 2, 3, 4 or 5
- Functional Skills qualifications, eg in maths, English or ICT, a technical certificate, such as a BTEC or City & Guilds Progression Award, knowledge-based qualifications, such as a

Higher National Certificate (HNC), a Higher National Diploma (HND) or a Foundation degree.

## Pay and right to minimum wage

ACCORDING to the National Careers Service, the average wage for an apprentice is £170 per week.

The current minimum wage rate for an apprentice is £2.68 per hour.

This rate applies to apprentices aged 16 to 18 and those aged 19 or more who are in their first year.

Apprentices aged 19 or over who have completed their first year must be paid at least the minimum wage rate for their age.

Apprentices must be paid for their normal working hours (minimum 30 hours per week), and for training that is part of the apprenticeship (usually one day per week).

## Holidays

APPRENTICES get at least 20 days of paid holiday per year, plus bank holidays.

## Applying for vacancies

VISIT the Apprenticeships website to search and apply for Apprenticeship vacancies.

At any one time there are thousands of jobs available in a variety of industry sectors across England. You can apply for as many as you like.

■ **For more information, visit** [apprenticeships.org.uk](http://apprenticeships.org.uk)

## A scheme that's a win-win for all those involved

APPRENTICESHIPS are thriving in England and established sectors such as construction, manufacturing and engineering are continuing to support the scheme as well as a significant increase in the service sector.

The range of occupations today is wide-ranging and apprenticeships have developed to match this.

Some of the fastest-growing areas have been in IT, accountancy, childcare, health and retail.

Skills Minister Nick Boles said:

"Apprenticeships deliver work for young people and adults, enabling them to earn while they learn in a real job, gaining a real qualification and a real future. They help businesses to grow their own talent."

Currently, more than 100,000 employers in England offer apprenticeships in 200,000 locations, covering more than 170 industries and 1,500 different job roles.

If you live in England, are over 16 and not in full-time education, you can apply for an apprenticeship.

They can take as little as one year and as long as four years to complete and they cover some 1,200 job roles in a range of industries that might surprise you.





## Starting Primary School in 2015?

...then come and see us



### Lynsted and Norton Primary School

#### Open Days

24th September

16th October

13th November

### Milstead and Frinsted C of E Primary

#### School Open Days

30th September

21st October

10th November



### Selling C of E Primary School

#### Open Days

25th September

13th October

14th November

### Petham Primary School

#### Open Days

15th October

26th November

### Pilgrims' Way Primary School

#### Open Afternoons

2nd & 23rd October, 2-3pm

27th November, 2-3pm



**The Village Academy**



Learning together

For further information, please visit  
[www.thevillageacademy.co.uk](http://www.thevillageacademy.co.uk)



## Thamesview School

### Open Evening

Thursday 16th October 6pm to 9pm

You are invited to Thamesview School's Open Evening to see our School in action! We are celebrating record breaking examination results and wish to showcase our state of the art learning environments and student centred curriculum.

Comments from our new Year 7 students...

'I am looking forward to the next five years at Thamesview.'

(Alex)

'My daughter cannot wait to come to school every day!'

(Parent)

'We like the ethos of the school, its ambition and the way it helps everyone achieve their full potential.'

(Parent)

'Thamesview is fun and enjoyable! I am looking forward to the future!'

(Gemma)

Come and see what we have to offer!

Open Morning School Tours (contact the School Office to book a place)

Monday 13th October - 9am

Tuesday 14th October - 9am

01474 566 552 [thamesviewsch.co.uk](http://thamesviewsch.co.uk)  
f tvschl @ThamesviewSCH



Sutton Valence

One School,  
many journeys



## Open Mornings

Senior School (HMC 11-18 day and boarding)  
**Saturday 8th November 2014**

Sixth Form  
**Saturday 11th October 2014**

For details and to register please contact:  
Mrs Kathy Webster, Admissions Officer  
T: 01622 845206 | E: [websterk@svs.org.uk](mailto:websterk@svs.org.uk)



[www.svs.org.uk](http://www.svs.org.uk)

Advert ref: 0914S/KOS

70% A\* to B at A Level (2014)  
100% pass rate



# The Sittingbourne Community College

[www.sittingbournecommunitycollege.org.uk](http://www.sittingbournecommunitycollege.org.uk)

[office@sittingbourne.kent.sch.uk](mailto:office@sittingbourne.kent.sch.uk)

Tel: 01795 472449

## **YEAR 6 OPEN EVENING** **Thursday 02 October 6.00pm - 8.30pm**

Headteacher's Presentation: 6.15pm & 7.30pm

Parental tours are available daily from  
Monday 06 October to Friday 17 October.

Please contact the College office for more information.



Headteacher: Mrs F Trigwell B.Ed N.P.Q.H  
Deputy Headteachers: Miss Z Bridges MA & Mr M Lewis MA





# How to really get the most out of your well-deserved gap year

An expert in the subject reveals how students can make the maximum from their year off, see more of the world, learn new skills and boost their CV with a gap year trip. It should be a lot of fun... and a lot of use.

AFTER years of studying, gap year travel offers young people a chance to take a break from education and see a bit of the world.

But, increasingly, it's also an opportunity to gain valuable work experience and build skills to help you stand out in a tough job market.

Among the many companies and charities that organise volunteer and paid placements abroad, is Real Gap Experience.

Here Claire Biddell from the organisation tells us more...

**Are more young people considering gap years now because of the rise in education fees?**

The feedback we have had when visiting schools and colleges is that students are starting to consider taking a gap year as a way of taking some time out to be sure of their future decisions.

With the rise in education fees, students are definitely having to think more carefully around their career path.

**Are people going on gap year trips to improve their chances in the job**

kentnews.co.uk kent-life.co.uk

**market and do they actually enhance your CV?**

We've conducted market research with a range of students and it is becoming clear that young people today are branding themselves to stand out in a competitive workplace.

While the main reasons for travel were to see the world, explore and have fun, 33 per cent of respondents stated their motivation was to help them secure a future job and 31 per cent stated they were doing it to improve their CV.

With a range of trips on offer, including internships and volunteer projects, we try to encourage young people to make their travelling productive and see it as a way of developing themselves and boosting their CV.

As part of our research we asked employers what type of travel experiences would enhance students' CVs, volunteering was rated the top experience with 93 per cent of the votes, with overseas internships at 85 per cent.

**What is your most popular gap year trip?**

In recent years we have found our

most popular trip is the Thailand Experience as it combines volunteering and culture with adventure and time out to relax on the beaches – all within 28 days.

**What are your gap year tips when considering what to do and what not to do?**

We live by the phrase 'Experience it!', whether this means trying the local delicacies, getting involved with local communities, or trying something new.

Always pack half of what you think you'll need and try to learn some local lingo.

Also never be put off by travelling solo. Most of our customers go alone but return with heaps of new-found friendships.

**Are gap year trips for everyone?**

Yes! We have a huge range of trips, from teaching to animal conservation, so there's something for everyone.

At Real Gap our main age range is 16-25; however, our sister brand i-to-i has travellers of all ages. For more information on Real Gap go to [realgap.co.uk](http://realgap.co.uk).



**WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE:** The chance to meet differing cultures is huge



# More sixth-formers are picking the Baccalaureate over A-levels

RISING numbers of students are opting to study for a broader international qualification rather than taking A-levels, figures suggest. New statistics show a 4.4 per cent increase in UK candidates being entered for the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma compared with last year.

One private school head-teacher suggested that the IB may be becoming more attractive due to major reforms to England's exams system and "uncertainty" about the future of A-levels.

Youngsters taking the IB diploma,

which is aimed at sixth-formers, usually study six subjects from different groups, including their own language and a foreign language, social sciences, experimental sciences, maths and the arts.

Latest figures show that this year 4,790 UK candidates are taking the qualification, up from 4,589 in 2013.

The data, from the IB organisation, also shows that a total of 153 UK schools are offering the IB this year, down one from last year.

The number of independent schools teaching the course has

risen by one to 82 compared with 2013, while the number of state schools doing so has dropped by two to 71.

The IB is favoured by some private and state schools that see it as a broader, rigorous qualification that allows youngsters to study more subjects, whereas those taking A-levels usually focus on three or four subjects.

Sandra Morton, chairwoman of the IB Schools and Colleges Association (IBSCA) in the UK, said that in the past more state schools offered the IB than those

in the private sector.

"In the past few years, with the pressures on post-16 funding, some state schools, because of funding, had to give up the diploma," she said.

This has meant that the split between state and private schools teaching the qualification is now fairly even, she added.

"Despite fewer state schools offering the IB, more students are studying it. The reason is that more schools are going over completely to the IB. Most of these are in the state sector."

She added that IBSCA was optimis-

tic that recently announced funding changes, which will mean more money for schools offering the IB or five A-level programmes, will encourage others.

Tim Hands, chairman of the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference (HMC), which represents leading private schools, said: "The increase in IB numbers probably reflects uncertainty about the future of A-levels.

"We know that there will be considerable reforms, but we don't know how effective these will be or how accurate the marking will be."





Bishop of  
Rochester  
Academy

## YEAR 6 OPEN EVENING

THURSDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> OCTOBER 2014  
4PM to 7PM

Principal's Welcome at 5pm and 6pm

**"Passion Pays Off!"**

*Medway Messenger - GCSE Results Day - July 2014*

**"Senior Leaders and Governors ... have brought about rapid improvements, especially in overall achievement and behaviour"**

*Ofsted 2013*

**"Our Academy offers a good and expanding range of academic and vocational courses"**

☎ 01634 303005

✉ [office@boracademy.org](mailto:office@boracademy.org)



**St Edmund's School  
Canterbury**

Nursery | Pre-Prep | Junior | Senior

## An inspiring school experience



**Whole School Open Day Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September**

**Visit the Balloon Experience stand  
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An independent, co-educational day and boarding school for ages 3 - 18

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\*weather permitting

[www.stedmunds.org.uk](http://www.stedmunds.org.uk)



**Kent College  
Canterbury**

An outstanding school for boys and girls aged 3 - 18

Senior School Open Morning  
October 4<sup>th</sup> 9:00am until 12:30pm

Sixth Form Open Evening  
October 7<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm until 8:00pm

Senior School - 01227 763231  
Junior School - 01227 762436  
[www.kentcollege.com](http://www.kentcollege.com)

RATED ★★★★★  
SCHOOL GUIDE



# Careers in engineering and computer sciences beckon

THE Leigh UTC specialises in engineering and computer sciences, offering students a superb education in a state-of-the-art building that will give them the specialist skills, knowledge and experience to have a successful career in the technology sector.

The principal of Leigh UTC, which opened on Monday, September 8, is Steve Leahey.

He said: "At the moment you're probably facing some very important choices about your education.

"You'll know that getting these decisions right is highly likely to influence your future career and whether you reach the heights you want to reach"

"At the ground-breaking Leigh UTC we know we are at the very forefront of education for post-16 students.

"Our approach to learning, which involves lots of specialised input from industry and academic partners, will provide you with a great foundation for the future.

"We offer sixth-form students the chance to tailor their studies to fit their individual interests, abilities and ambitions.

"Alongside their academic studies students will spend one day a week in a work experience programme.

"The Leigh UTC offers different progression routes, which include A-levels, Level 3 Vocational Qualifications and Advanced Apprenticeships in engineering and IT.



**THE PRINCIPAL:** Steve Leahey

"All our students will have the opportunity to follow professional qualifications, which include Cisco Academy, Microsoft Academy and AutoDesk CAD

"Leigh UTC will be holding an open day on Saturday, October 4, and an open evening on Wednesday, October 15, for parents and students to attend."

If you would like further details about Leigh UTC and what it has to offer, they can be obtained from the website at [www.theleighutc.org.uk](http://www.theleighutc.org.uk).

# Singing, dancing, acting... stage is set for young talent

BUDDING actors have got the ideal place to step into the spotlight with Stagecoach Canterbury – offering quality part-time training in the performing arts for children aged four to 18.

It aims to nurture and develop young potential through singing, acting and dance classes, stretching young imaginations and building confidence.

It is open every weekend during term time with workshops during the school holidays.

Early Stages classes run alongside the main Stagecoach schools, for children aged four to six. The class is split into three 30-minute sessions. Class sizes are kept small (15 max) to enable every child to get the most from them.

Its Main Schools, which are suitable for children aged six to 18, run every week during term time, at weekends and evenings.

Split into groups of similar age ranges, each group rotate, learning an hour of acting, an hour of drama and an hour of dance.

Groups are trained by experienced teachers, who are professional choreographers, performers, directors or musicians.

Often copied but never equalled, Stagecoach offers quality training in the three performing arts disciplines, helping to develop confidence, physical awareness, communication and articulation, as well as being educational and fun.

There is no need to find separate singing, acting and dance classes in Canterbury, when Stagecoach offer all three to a high standard



**SMILES:** Stagecoach is educational and fun

under one roof.

All teachers are DBS (formerly CRB) checked so children and teenagers can work in a safe and protected environment. Fees work out at approx £9 per hour, which offers outstanding value for money for quality performing arts training, small class sizes, exams, medals, performances, magazine subscription, optional representation by The Stagecoach Agency which secures professional work for hundreds of children, and the many other extras that are offered by Stagecoach Canterbury.



**THE LEIGH UTC**  
a University Technical College for 14-19 year olds

**Enrol now for September**



**BE IMAGINATIVE** **BE CREATIVE** **BE INSPIRED**

**BE @THE LEIGH UTC**

A centre of excellence in computer sciences and engineering

The new Leigh UTC opened 8th September 2014 at The Bridge Business Park in Dartford and offers you a high-quality education that gives you the specialist skills, knowledge and experience to have a successful career in computer sciences and engineering.

Enrol now to start on the 8th September 2014

For more information visit us at our shop in Bluewater or get in touch:  
[www.theleighutc.org.uk](http://www.theleighutc.org.uk)  
[info@theleighutc.co.uk](mailto:info@theleighutc.co.uk)  
 01474 700 800

**IMAGINE THE FUTURE, CREATE THE FUTURE, INSPIRE THE FUTURE**

**SING! DANCE! ACT NOW!**

**AT STAGECOACH CANTEBURY**

The original, largest and still the best network of performing arts schools in the world

Nurturing and developing young peoples potential through dance, drama and singing

**NEW EARLY STAGERS AND MAIN SCHOOL CLASSES FROM 4-18 YEAR OLDS**

Enrol now online at [stagecoach.co.uk/canterbury](http://stagecoach.co.uk/canterbury) or call 01732 824758 or 07944736610

**OPEN NOW**

**Stagecoach**  
Theatre Arts Schools







# Caring approach at Bishop of Rochester Academy

THE Bishop of Rochester Academy is a Church of England school where everyone works and learns within its caring and supportive Christian ethos.

The academy opened in September 2010 and has a community of some 1,200 students plus a growing sixth form. It serves mainly the area of Chatham and we demonstrate that we are at the 'heart of the community'.

Our Academy 'sponsors' – Rochester Diocesan Board of Education, Canterbury Christ Church University and Medway Council – support us in our focus on raising educational standards and creating opportunities for the young people of Medway to achieve their full potential and to excel, with aspirations for all students to continue into further or higher education whether with an academic or vocational direction.

We provide an innovative and challenging curriculum which emphasises achievement and high expectations of, and for, all our students. Our exam results are set to increase year on year.

This is a particularly exciting time for the Bishop of Rochester Academy as we have moved in to our £23 million new building.

This will provide an exceptional learning environment in which to work and learn, with superb facilities for all students and staff.

At the academy, we seek to create an environment in which students and staff feel



**GOOD WORK:** Exam results set to increase

able to explore and express their beliefs.

All pupils attend an Act of Worship each week, and each daily school time includes the opportunity for a time of reflection.

We appreciate that for many students, many aspects of the Christian ethos of the academy will be unfamiliar.

However, over time we hope to reassure students that rather than forcing them to believe certain things, or act in certain ways, we are merely providing opportunities for them to investigate what they themselves believe.

# Calling all nurses who want to get way back into caring

ARE you a nurse who has been on a career break? Do you miss using your skills and caring for patients?

We can help. It really is as easy as the proverbial 1,2,3.

You can take part in Kent Community Health's return-to-practice course.

You can also renew your nursing registration.

Or go back to work as a qualified nurse.

You see, there really are so many opportunities for those wanting to get back into the wonderful profession of nursing.

We are working in partnership with higher education institutions to offer a return-to-practice programme, which will lead to a substantive Band 5 nursing role with us upon successful completion of the course.

As one of the biggest providers of community healthcare in the country, our staff are our greatest asset.

We are looking for committed healthcare professionals to join us.

We can offer you a supportive environment, regular clinical peer supervision networks, mentorship programme and in-house competency learning and development opportunities.

You can apply on our website at [www.kentcht.nhs.uk/jobs](http://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/jobs). Complete the online form, giving your reasons for applying.

To find out more, phone the head of



**HERE TO HELP:** Nursing is a great job

clinical education, Helen Hatter, on 01622 221962.

We are also looking for qualified health visitors who may wish to return to work.

Perhaps you have retired from the profession or have taken a break to have a family.

To find out more about our health visiting opportunities, please phone head of health visiting Sue Flynn on 01233 667869 or email [sue.flynn@kentcht.nhs.uk](mailto:sue.flynn@kentcht.nhs.uk).



**CANTERBURY**  
cathedral

## VOICE TRIALS

FOR BOYS AGED 7 & 8  
8 NOVEMBER 2014



Substantial scholarships are awarded and choristers benefit from an all-round excellent education at St Edmund's School Canterbury.

The Master of Choristers, David Flood, is always pleased to meet and advise parents and their sons.

For further details please telephone

**01227 865242**

[davidf@canterbury-cathedral.org](mailto:davidf@canterbury-cathedral.org)



@No1Cathedral

Kent Community Health **NHS**  
NHS Trust

**Are you a nurse who has been on a career break?**

**Do you miss using your skills and caring for patients?**

It's as easy as...



**1** Take part in our return to practice course.

**2** Renew your nursing registration, if you need to.

**3** Go back to work as a qualified nurse.

We are working in partnership with higher education institutions to offer a return to practice programme.

To apply, visit [www.kentcht.nhs.uk/jobs](http://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/jobs)  
Complete the online form, giving your reasons for applying.  
To find out more, phone Head of Clinical Education  
Helen Hatter on 01622 211962.





# A-level options must be informed choices

Find out which subjects are approved by the country's leading universities and which may be your best bet...

MANY GCSE students who plan to go to university in a couple of years will be thinking about which A-level subjects to choose.

If you've already decided on a university course, do a bit of research to find out if any courses are an absolute requirement.

A large proportion of pupils, however, won't yet know what they want to study at 18 but will want to select subjects that will help them secure a spot at a good university when they do eventually apply.

Last year, the prestigious Russell Group of universities published a guide called Informed Choices, which explains what they are looking for. It says preferred subjects are the sciences,

English literature, languages (modern and classic), history, geography, mathematics and further mathematics.

According to the guide, you do not necessarily need to take three of what it calls "facilitating subjects", unless you hope to study medicine, for example, but the more you do the more degree and career options will be open to you.

Both Cambridge University and the London School of Economics have published lists of subjects on their websites that they view less favourably. The lists feature, among others, sports studies, accounting, music technology, media studies and dance.

As important as it is that you select A-levels popular with universities, studential.

com advises students to choose ones that they would also enjoy doing.

"Even if you are good at a certain subject, you might not actually enjoy it all that much," it says.

"There's no point going through sixth form or college and never looking forward to lessons because you don't like them.

"This in turn may make you feel you can't cope with the work and make you feel stressed in the long term. If you look forward to lessons, chances are you will approach them confidently and do well in them."

■ To read the Informed Choices guide, go to [russellgroup.ac.uk/informed-choices](http://russellgroup.ac.uk/informed-choices).



**WHAT'S YOUR VISION?** Many GCSE students will be thinking of their A-level selection



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Pupils look forward to showing you around at the school's next Open Day on Saturday 4th October 2014 from 9.15am to 12 noon. Booking is not required but please contact Registrar, Lynne Davies, 01634 888590 or email [admissions@kings-rochester.co.uk](mailto:admissions@kings-rochester.co.uk) with any questions or for more information.

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# A helping hand, a listening ear... it all helps

Some pupils are intimidated by the prospect of starting secondary school but parents can make a big difference by talking to them... and listening to their concerns

STARTING secondary school heralds a big change in your child's life.

It will mean a complete change of routine, more homework, longer days, new classmates, new teachers, a new journey to school and new surroundings.

It can be a time full of excitement but can also be worrying for some children.

To help them settle in, experts agree that having a routine is important, as well as being organised for each week ahead.

Regular bedtimes, exercise and eating well will help your child cope with new experiences and perform better in their studies.

Having a copy of your child's timetable will help to ensure they have the correct equipment on the right days.

Making friends is an important part of feeling happy at school – encourage this by inviting friends.

The increased workload will also

be a challenge for some children and making homework a daily routine is the best way to prevent it piling up.

Settling in may take a long time, but if your child is very upset and has not made friends after a considerable time, then speak to the school.

Your child's teacher or head-teacher will be experienced in dealing with these problems and will work with you to help your child settle in.

Charity Family Lives advises: "Make time to talk and listen to your child each day to check how things are going.

"Just giving attention in this way can help your child feel supported and more confident.

"However, resist the temptation to ask too many questions, especially when a child first gets home from school and is likely to be tired, hungry and short-tempered from coping with many new people and things."



**UNDERSTANDING:** Listening to your child's worries regarding transition to secondary school can ease their fears

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**NOVEL APPROACH:** Lisa Cutts is a detective constable with Kent Police... and a successful author



## Detective's criminal insight comes in handy at home

**Molly Kersey** talks to full-time police officer and part-time author Lisa Cutts, who is putting her knowledge to good use in carving out a successful writing career

**B**ALANCING a full-time job in the police force at the same time as writing crime novels is no mean feat.

And it's something Lisa Cutts, a detective constable for Kent Police, knows all too well.

While many people would be hard pushed to do just one of these things, she has successfully juggled both since beginning her first crime detective novel.

Despite her hectic schedule, Ms Cutts has used her unique professional perspective to her advantage, and her novels have been praised for their absolute authenticity.

"I work full time and what I do is if I get home on time I set an hour or two aside in the evening. Sometimes I don't manage it, I just spend as long as I possibly can," she said.

"It depends how busy we are.

"I have been with Kent Police for just over 18 years. My current role is major crime which is primarily murders, serious sexual assaults and that kind of thing.

"It's really helped, even though everything I write is completely fictitious."

Ms Cutt's latest novel *Remember*, which is the second book in the DC Nina Foster series, following on from her best-selling debut *Never Forget*.

An extract from her debut novel won the Writer's Retreat Competition and was published by Myriad in July last year.

The highly anticipated second novel follows Nina's return to work after recovering from a near-fatal injury.

"It does encompass a lot of other stuff but it's primarily about a cold

case into a historic train crash," she said.

The book is written from the point of view of Nina, but it also delves into the experiences of her fellow detectives.

"I've created my protagonist, DC Nina Foster, as someone who

**“No matter how good and dedicated officer an individual is, he or she will never do it all on their own”**

works as part of a team. I wanted to show that it takes dozens, if not hundreds of police and civilian employees to charge and convict a murderer.

"No matter how good and dedicated officer an individual is,

he or she will never do it all on their own," she said.

"Nina Foster is someone who knows the boundaries and the rules, but just as important, she knows that as soon as she steps over those boundaries, she is off the investigation.

"Who would want to jeopardise the conviction of a killer, simply because one of the detectives on the team had issues? How would the senior investigating officer ever face the victim's family to tell them the police got it wrong?

"No-one is ever above the law."

Although the characters and events are completely fictional, the police procedures in the book are all correct and based on Ms Cutt's knowledge of police work.

She has been very careful to

**Continued on page 49 »**

» Features team

**Editor: David Mairs**  
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QUOTE: RF-KOS

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Check-in

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**INCLUDED:** Escorted throughout  
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• All excursions  
• Transfers abroad

## RIVIERA OF CARNIVALS - NICE VIAREGGIO & PORTOFINO



QUOTE: NV2-KOS

**Escorted Holiday by Rail - afternoon departure**  
**8 days, semi all inclusive, from £899pp**  
Departs 12 February, 2015

**FREE DRINKS**

This super holiday, taking in the French and Italian Rivas' premiere Carnivals, starts with a glass of Champagne at St Pancras famous Champagne Bar before an escorted afternoon departure by Eurostar to Paris. On the Riviera enjoy free drinks every night at your hotel, visits to Nice & Viareggio carnivals and Portofino. We stay in Diano Marina, situated on Italy's Riviera of Flowers. Our hotel is centrally located, a short walk from the sea and the town centre.

**INCLUDED:** Escorted throughout  
• Champagne Check-in at St Pancras International (not available from Ebbsfleet) • Return Eurostar & TGV rail travel London St Pancras to Nice (from Ebbsfleet on request) • 1 night hotel B&B in Paris • 6 nights sharing a twin/double room at the Piccolo Hotel, Diano Marina with buffet breakfasts & dinners and free drinks 6pm to 11pm every night - local brands of beer, wine & spirits • Visits to Nice and Viareggio Carnivals and Portofino • All transfers abroad

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QUOTE: NC2-KOS

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**FLY FROM  
STANSTED**

This super holiday takes in the French Riviera's premiere Carnivals and Monaco. Nice Carnival is the most popular winter event on the French Riviera. Sleepy Menton bursts into a riot of colour with its huge citrus display garden. We stay at Nice's Hotel West End, a jewel of the Belle Epoque, ideally located on the legendary Promenade des Anglais and just a few minutes from the airport and town centre - the Grand Flower Parade passes directly in front of the hotel.

**INCLUDED:** Escorted throughout in Nice • Return flights with hand luggage from Stansted (supplement may apply) • 3 nights B&B sharing a twin/double room at the 4-star West End Hotel Nice • Return rail travel to Monaco and Menton • Entrance to Menton's citrus display garden • Entrance to Nice Carnival Parade • Transfers from airport to hotel on arrival and departure

## LAKE BLEĐ & CASTLE CHRISTMAS - SLOVENIA



QUOTE: BX12-KOS

**Escorted Holiday by Air from Southend**  
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Departs 22 December, 2014

**FLY FROM  
SOUTHEND**

Christmas in Bled, Slovenia is just magical - framed by the snow-capped peaks of the majestic Julian Alps it is the perfect dream image of the festive season. Bled has plenty of festivities and we also include visits to Ljubljana, Slovenia's capital, the Postojna Caves - Europe's most visited - and Lake Bohinj. The highlight of this superb Christmas holiday will be Christmas Day Lunch at the restaurant in Bled Castle.

**INCLUDED:** Return flights to Venice from Southend including luggage - supp't may apply • 6 nights sharing a twin/double room at the Astoria Hotel • Christmas day lunch in Bled Castle • 6 breakfasts • 4 buffet dinners plus a traditional Slovenian buffet dinner and a candlelit dinner with music on Christmas eve • ¼ litre of wine and ½ litre of mineral water with dinners at the hotel • Excursions • Services of a Tour Manager in resort • Airport to hotel transfer on arrival and departure



QUOTE: FP5/9-KOS

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Drinks

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**INCLUDED:** Escorted throughout  
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• Excursions & transfers abroad

## ZANDVOORT HISTORIC GRAND PRIX & AMSTERDAM



QUOTE: HZ8-KOS

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**FLY FROM  
SOUTHEND OR  
STANSTED**

The Dutch seaside town of Zandvoort, the former home of the much-missed Dutch Grand Prix, now hosts one of Europe's best historic motor racing festivals - runner up to the Silverstone Classic in the 2013 International Motor Sport Awards. The Saturday night driver's parade through the town is a unique highlight. We include two days at Zandvoort Historic Grand Prix, one night in Amsterdam and 3 nights in a 4 star hotel in Scheveningen, the Netherlands top seaside resort.

**INCLUDED:** Escorted throughout  
• Champagne Check-in at London St Pancras (rail travellers only) • Return rail travel from London St Pancras (Ebbsfleet departures on request) to Amsterdam OR return flights with luggage from Southend or Stansted - supp't may apply • 1 night B&B at the 3 star Ibis Amsterdam Centre • 3 nights B&B at the 4 star Carlton Hotel Scheveningen • 2 day tickets for the Zandvoort Historic Grand Prix qualifying & Race day • Admission to the Louwman Museum • All coach transfers

## FERRARI - LIVE THE DREAM IN MARANELLO



QUOTE: FM3/6/10-KOS

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**INCLUDED:** Escorted throughout abroad • 3 nights B&B sharing a twin/double room at the 4-star Maranello Village Hotel • Admissions to: The Ferrari Museum, The Enzo Ferrari Museum PLUS guided bus tour inside the Fiorino test-track proving grounds and Viale Enzo Ferrari • Return Easyjet flights Gatwick to Bologna • Transfers abroad

## MONACO SUPERCARS, PARIS & THE CÔTE D'AZUR



QUOTE: SM4-KOS

**Escorted Holiday by Rail - afternoon departure**  
**6 days, £799pp**  
Departs 17 April, 2015

**CHAMPAGNE  
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**INCLUDED:** Champagne Check-in at London St Pancras • Return Eurostar & TGV rail travel from London St Pancras to Cannes • Overnight bed-and-breakfast stay in Paris • Four night four-star bed-and-breakfast accommodation in Cannes, including dinner on day of arrival • Full day excursion to Monaco with entry to Top Marques Show • Full day excursion to St Tropez and Port Grimaud • Transfers in Paris and Cannes • Experienced Tour Manager throughout • Ferrari driving experience options are available at a supplement

**Note:** Holidays by Air are subject to flight availability at time of booking - supplement may apply



« Continued from page 47

strike a balance between making it clear what work is really involved in a police investigation, giving readers the chance to understand the policing world from a new perspective.

So has she considered resigning from the police force if this book also took off?

"I think I would because I do enjoy both, but to be quite honest with you it's becoming increasingly more difficult," she said.

"It would be nice to be at the stage where I could choose one or the other and I have to say policing does get more and more difficult."

Ms Cutts, who grew up in Bexley-heath but now lives in Maidstone

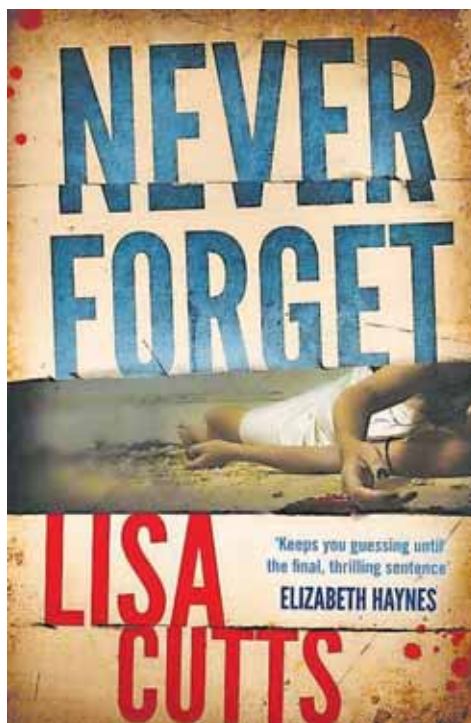
**“It was really reading other people's books and thinking ‘well that's not accurate’ which made me want to try it myself”**

with her husband, said this would come as “no surprise” to her colleagues.

The writer has a first degree in law and a further degree in applied criminal investigation.

She decided to try her hand at writing after noticing that there were certain inaccuracies in other novels.

"I'd always been a big fan of reading anything and everything. It was really reading other people's books and thinking 'well that's not accurate' which made me want to try it myself," she explained.



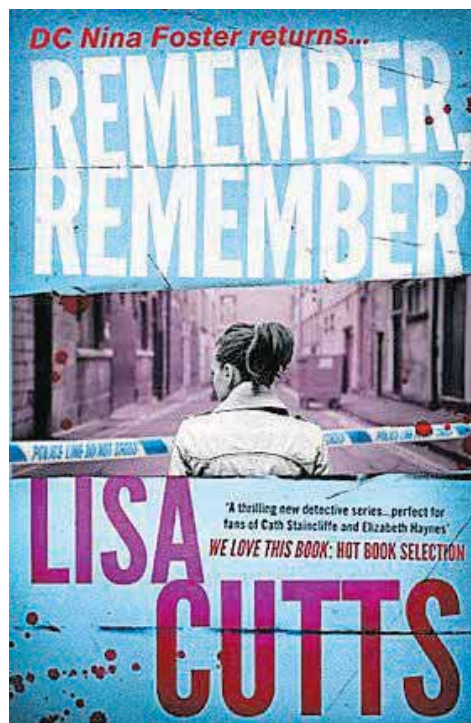
**PAPER CUTTS:** Ms Cutts has just released her second book Remember, Remember to sit alongside Never Forget

"Too often, I have read and enjoyed a book but the thought that was foremost in my mind, was that the entire story couldn't have happened, either the police officers failed to carry out a basic action every constable would adhere to, or the offender would be identified and caught almost immediately because of

something he or she had failed to do.

"Accuracy is so very important to me because I was keen to show the real work of the police.

"A murder investigation is manic, it's fraught, it's exhausting, but it's structured, and there just isn't room for detectives who want to go off and do their own thing.



don't want them in their major incident room."

Ms Cutts added: "I have to say it was harder than I anticipated to create the suspense and keep the page turning.

"I was trying to get as much gripping, suspenseful stuff but keeping it very realistic. That was really quite difficult, but it was part of the reason that I thought let's give it a go.

**“Having a sense of humour is a coping mechanism for officers - it's just a way of getting through the day”**

"It's got very good reviews so far."

Ms Cutts enjoys the work of Agatha Christie, but said she would not be able to write like that in this day and age because it would not be correct forensically.

She also enjoys crime detective books which add an element of humour, such as those written by American writer Carl Hiassen.

"Although there's nothing funny about murder," she said. "But having a sense of humour is a coping mechanism for police officers and it's just a way of getting through the day."

Ms Cutts has tried to include elements of comedy within her own writing.

■ Ms Cutts will be discussing her latest novels and how her day job provides her plenty of background material at Allington Library, Castle Road, Maidstone on September 23 at 7pm. The event is free and open to the public.

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# Destination Europe to catch those last

Seeking a little late summer sunshine? We take a look at some of the September deals available across on the Continent...

## Domaine de la Baume Provence, France

If you had to imagine the perfect hotel in the south of France, it would probably be something very like Domaine de la Baume.

There's the shady gravel terrace, where you could have a glass of rose with your lunchtime salad, and the beautiful swimming pool, surrounded by roses and cypress trees.

Then there's the hotel itself, which has the intimate feel of a private home, but all the mod cons and slick service you'd expect of a luxury hotel.

The Domaine is the latest addition to the Sibuet collection; an 18th century gem, an hour and a half's drive from Nice, set in 100 acres of landscaped gardens and meadows, and once the home of celebrated modern artist Bernard Buffet.

Bedrooms are beautifully and tastefully furnished with antique furniture and Provencal fabrics, alongside state-of-the-art flat-screen TVs (artfully hidden inside gilt-edged mirrors) and super-fast internet connection. The best room is the

Annabel suite on the first floor, named in honour of Buffet's wife, with its private terrace, open fire and magnificent views.

Spend days riding around the estate, taking part in a cookery lesson with the head chef, or visiting the spa, set in a log cabin next to a series of waterfalls.

■ **Doubles from 440 euros per night, half board. Visit [en.domaine-delabaume.com](http://en.domaine-delabaume.com). British Airways flies to Nice from London airports from £40 one way.**

## Park Hyatt Vienna, Austria

FINE art, grand architecture and a love of the outdoors make Vienna a great choice for a warm weather city break.

Drawing even more attention to the Austrian capital is new luxury hotel Park Hyatt Vienna, located in the city's Unesco-listed First District in a renovated 100-year-old building that once served as a bank.

Smooth marble pillars, crystal lanterns and Viennese mirrors evoke the grandeur of the Habsburg



dynasty, who once ruled the city, while there are also references to the Secessionist arts movement, championed by Gustav Klimt.

A subterranean spa features a 15m pool in the bank's former vault, while The Bank restaurant occupies a dining room that could compete with some of Vienna's greatest palaces. A menu features European regional cuisine made with locally-sourced products, including river salmon and pike-perch.

Temperatures are still warm in September, and there's still the chance to take a dip in one of the city's many natural swimming spots, located in pollution-free rivers.

■ **Doubles from £297, room only.**

Visit [vienna.park.hyatt.com](http://vienna.park.hyatt.com). Flights to Vienna via Expedia.

## Villa Bila Brac, Croatia

SWING open the door from the back bedroom at Villa Bila, and in the distance, you might see a yacht bobbing up and down on the sun-dappled, teal Adriatic sea.

Perched on the south-east coast of the Brac, the biggest island in Dalmatia, the spacious, gleaming white five bedroom property is literally on the water's edge at the port of Sumartin. A speed boat can even take guests directly from the airport to the front door.

The sound of waves crashing can be heard from every room, and the only thing more awe-inspiring than the beautiful artwork on walls is the picture perfect view of the rolling mountains and glittering sea, viewed through the large French windows.

Guests have access to a speed boat and 33ft yacht for the duration of their stay, allowing them to explore other islands such as nearby Hvar, and reach secluded restaurants which are only accessible by water.

The local village has no big hotels, meaning it's possible to truly immerse yourself in the local Croatian way of life.

For an extra fee, Villa Bila staff can cook and serve dishes such as local

## GARDENERS ARMS



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# remaining rays of summer sunshine



**GREAT GETAWAYS:** The pool at Domäne de la Baume in Provence, left, Park Hyatt in Vienna Austria and the pool at Andel's Hotel in Lodz, Poland

fish and black ink risotto, in the dining room, or the private garden filled with pine, olive and lemon trees. There really is no need to lift a finger while staying there, except perhaps to click away on your camera.

■ From 550 euros per day including all taxes. Visit [Villabla.com](http://Villabla.com). Easyjet fly to Split from London, from £22.99 one way.

## Il Saviatino Florence, Italy

FORAGING in dense thickets and

sliding down dusty verges is all part of the day job for truffle hunter Giulio Benuzzi, who, accompanied by his shaggy-haired Lagotto Romagnolo dog Eda, roams the Tuscan hills in search of the highly prized delicacy.

Last year, he collected a kilo in an hour - worth an impressive 500 euros - and reveals that a large number were found in the grounds of 15th century villa Il Saviatino, which now operates as a five-star hotel. He regularly guides guests on tours of the surrounding woodland,

teaching them about a passion that has even led him to make sketches and write poems about the gourmet fungus.

Set on a hillside in Fiesole, with views of the terracotta Duomo in Florence, the hotel has been meticulously restored to its former glory by the Pigozzo family. Paint has been stripped away to reveal original frescoes, and lemon trees in the terraced gardens cultivated to their original height. The food served is excellent, with many ingredients found on site - including, of course,

those precious truffles.

■ Doubles from 322 euros with breakfast. Visit [salviatino.com](http://salviatino.com). Ryanair fly to Pisa from London from £19.99 one way.

## Andel's Hotel Lodz Lodz, Poland

A MAJOR city 80 miles south-west of Warsaw, Lodz (pronounced "wooj") has a rich textile history dating back to Poland's industrial revolution and the boom of clothing manufacturing in the 1870s.

Today, the city's fashion credentials hold their own against the style powerhouses of London, Paris, Milan and New York, making it an alternative choice for a chic weekend break.

Artists come here to fill the walls of buildings with brilliantly bizarre murals, film-makers fulfil their dreams at the world-renowned National Film School, and writers, musicians and designers exchange numbers in the trendy cafes, bars and studios of Off Piotrkowska.

Nowhere else are these historic and artistic connections better represented than at Andel's Hotel Lodz, a 19th-century red-brick structure that, having once been a thriving weaving mill, is now enjoying its second heyday as a spectacular modern guest house.

Staggering through its sliding doors, guests are greeted by a hypnotic patchwork of baby blue and yellow that creeps around the circular carpets and ceilings. Purple spotlights illuminate abstract works of art hanging from cast-iron beams and bare brick walls, and Air's Moon Safari is piped through the foyer.

It's a different kind of luxury here. One that blends elements of past and present, classic and contemporary, industrial and artistic.

■ Doubles from 120 euros with breakfast. Visit [Vi-hotels.com](http://Vi-hotels.com). Wizz Air flies to Warsaw from London from £25.99 one way.

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» For more food and drink articles pick up a copy of this month's

KENT LIFE



**STAR TURN:** Kaddy Lee-Preston presented the award-winners at last year's glamorous evening at the Tudor Park Marriott Hotel and Country Park

## Nominees awaiting judges' visit ahead of awards evening finale

The nominees for this year's Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food and Drink Awards are in, and now the hard work begins in picking 2014's worthy winners

**T**HE judging is under way in the 2014 Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards, sponsored by Motorline Maserati.

Thank you all for the hundreds of nominations we received for the awards, which are designed to champion, highlight and offer a showcase to Kent's outstanding food and drink industry.

From local producers and suppliers to small farming businesses, restaurants, chefs, pubs and hoteliers, all are people who care about the countryside and the future of our local environment.

Entries have now closed and our hand-picked panel of high-profile judges, who all live and work in Kent, has selected a short-list from the nominations.

This begins the independent judging process, when all finalists will be visited or interviewed to determine a worthy winner in each of the categories.

All finalists will be invited to the prestigious awards ceremony in November, when they will enjoy a

### THIS YEAR'S SHORT-LISTED FINALISTS

#### Newcomer of the Year

Cocolicious, Cranbrook  
The Milk House, Sissinghurst  
Whitstable Produce Store, Whitstable

#### Food Producer of the Year

The Chai Stop, Minster  
Mockbeggar Farm, Rochester  
Wild Bread, Faversham

#### Drink Producer of the Year

Hush Heath Winery, Staplehurst  
Little Stour Orchard, West Stourmouth  
Gadds, Ramsgate Brewery

#### Farm Shop of the Year

Hop Shop, Shoreham  
Stanhill Farm Shop, Wilmington

Harvel House Farm Shop, Harvel

#### Farmers' Market of the Year

Shipbourne  
Cliftonville  
Chislehurst

#### Butcher of the Year

Higgs, Chislehurst  
Brogdale, Faversham

#### Teashop of the Year

Sandhurst Tea Rooms, Sandhurst  
Pines Garden Tea Room, St Margaret's Bay  
Fir Tree, Penshurst

#### Customer Service of the Year

Spadework, Offham  
Holwood Farm Shop, Keston

Bruno's French Bakes, Rochester

#### Chef of the Year

Graham Garrett, The West House, Biddenden  
Dev Biswal, Ambrette, Margate  
Andrew McLeish, Chapter One, Locksbottom

#### Restaurant of the Year

Chapter One, Locksbottom  
The Sportsman, Seasalter  
Deesons British Restaurant, Canterbury

#### Pub of the Year

The Compasses Inn, Crundale  
The Flying Horse Inn, Boughton Aluph  
Three Tuns, Lower Halstow

fabulous reception and three-course meal prepared by Tudor Park's talented head chef Tom Biddle before finding out if they

are a winner.

The 2014 Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards Dinner will take place at Tudor

Park Marriott Hotel and Country Park, Bearsted, near Maidstone, on November 13, 2014, from 6.30pm to midnight.



# Entertainment with your beer? Then head to The Anchor, a national champ

**T**HE Anchor Inn in Wingham has been crowned Best Entertainment Pub at this year's Great British Pub Awards.

Run by publicans Kevin and Michelle Abbott, the High Street pub comprises three elements: the pub itself, the Anchor Café Bar and Anchor Arts Centre.

The pub offers real ales, lagers, spirits, and a range of quality wines. It hosts live music on Sunday afternoons, which has proved popular, as has the refurbished and well-kept garden.

From 10.30am, the Anchor Café Bar serves freshly-ground coffee,

teas, breakfasts, snacks and cakes; and from midday to 3pm there are lunches.

Afternoons see Kentish cream teas, snacks, cakes and sandwiches being served and there is an evening dinner service and Sunday lunches. Locally-sourced ingredients help support local suppliers.

The Anchor Arts Centre is housed in a refurbished function room and has become a community resource for local people and groups wishing to hold meetings or stage events.

It is also available for private parties and functions.

Organised by industry publication the Pubcan's Morning Advertiser, the annual awards celebrate the



best of Britain's pubs across 17 categories.

Kevin and Michelle received their award from Sky Sports F1 presenter Natalie Pinkham at a ceremony at London's Hilton Hotel on Park Lane attended by leading pub industry figures.

Kevin said: "It has been a very exciting time for us. We were determined to be successful and intend to be here for many years to come."

"There's a real appetite for a family-run pub in the village, with which we have strong links, and we're very pleased with how things have gone."

"We wanted to make sure The Anchor served the local community while at the same time creating an attractive venue for people to travel to. I think this award shows we've achieved those aims."

Enterprise regional manager John Woodward said: "With real vision,

Kevin and Michelle have succeeded in turning Wingham's most prominent and historic pub into a genuine community hub, which caters for a wide range of clubs and groups.

"At the same time, thanks to diversification, it's now a thriving village pub once more."

**■ The Anchor Inn**  
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## Improved driving skills real solution

THERE has been a road accident (KoS, Sheppey Crossing, last week). Lower the speed limit and install speed cameras... now what was the cause?

All the above is true of the crash on the Sheppey Crossing.

However, it would seem to some, that lower speed limits and cameras are the panacea to every incident, whatever the cause.

How many millions of journeys over this bridge have there been without any problem: does this not enter the equation?

Very few vehicles break down instantly, where you cannot 'coast' to a more safe place, so there is no need to stop just over the brow of any hill.

Carry a warning triangle. Do not drive faster than the distance you can see ahead and could be required to stop in, including fog.

Improving basic driving skills are never mentioned, probably because of the low driving skills of those proposing more 'big stick' legislation.

Once again drivers are not getting good quality designed roads, like a hard shoulder, because of the lack of investment, even though it might cost lives.

But somehow there is always money for speed cameras!

**Terry Hudson, Whitstable**

## Trust was accident waiting to happen

IT comes as no surprise, in fact I welcome it, that East Kent Hospitals University Foundation Trust have been put into 'special measures' having been found to be 'inadequate'.

We, in Tate (Thanet Action for Trauma Emergencies), have been telling the Care and Quality Commission (CQC) that emergency care for Thanet is inadequate and has been for the last two-and-half-years.

On April 8, 2013, EKHUFT adopted the 'Trauma Pathway' devised by the Royal College of Surgeons to improve emergency care outcomes/figures.

The plan was based upon trauma casualties having to have access to either a major trauma centre or a trauma unit in under 45 minutes.

Tate have this in black and white.

I will never understand why EKHUFT agreed with the Kent and Medway Critical Care and Trauma Network that the three trauma units selected would leave all of Thanet outside the 45-minute specification.

Didn't they do any research? Or did they know Thanet would be excluded?

## LETTER OF THE WEEK



## Wrong to vilify those seeking a safer future

LAST week's ill-informed letter from your writer in Lamberhurst regarding immigrants must not go unaddressed.

This is not a 'problem', but a growing situation which should never have been unexpected.

It is disparaging and spiteful to suggest immigrants have travelled from war-torn and drought-ridden countries where their life is under threat just for the benefits – would you not do the same in that situation?

And to suggest that this is a soft option is a myth and one that must be dispelled by the media, because it has a responsibility to start doing so.

Check my facts, but I believe the latest Home Office figures present a number of 38,000 incomants who have not found work after three months, and who rely quite rightly on some form of support.

This compares so insignificantly with the massive economic benefit from immigration as a whole, let alone to our National

Health Service.

This is a horrible humanitarian European and United Nations situation to deal with, but we must stop feeling pious about the level with which we should value our fellow humans.

Centuries of unsettlement and tyrannical regimes should now be addressed by a civilised worldwide community in the 21st century.

The people trying to reach the UK are doing so because the gamble between being drowned or crushed under a lorry's wheels is worth taking.

And let us not escape our own guilt in cementing this situation over many centuries.

So please think about that when you are settling down for your evening's warm meal, glass of wine or cup of tea in front of X Factor or EastEnders.

The life of the aid-worker in Iraq should not be in vain and his contribution to our beings as Great Britons must be continued.

**Andrew South, Dymchurch**

Let us hope the CQC will insist EKHUFT employs more staff in all areas. It is not the stretched, doctors and nurses to blame for the inadequacies – it is clearly management.

**Betty Renz, by email**

## Rural idyll not on businesses map

THE recent letters on lorries in Kent

villages reminded my wife and I of our experience in the small hamlet in which we lived for 25 years, 10 miles from Maidstone.

When we moved there it was peaceful and a real pleasure to be part of such a quiet community.

Then the problems started...

A small plot of land next to us was given permission for a single bungalow.

The owner purchased the field

behind the house, agricultural land, on which he used noisy machinery to turn the site into a vegetable produce facility.

Our many complaints to the local council fell on deaf ears.

The beautiful orchards around us were uprooted and we were surrounded by wall-to-wall wheat and rape seed fields.

The fields were owned by syndicates in London who care nothing for the countryside, and who put managers in to maximise the profit from the land.

A small garage at the end of the street became a major repair centre with tractors and other equipment tested along our formally quiet road.

Heavy lorries then began to make shortcuts through the hamlet.

We decided to move to Devon to find some rural peace.

Unfortunately, Devon council has no more control over the heavy lorry problem than Kent due to EU law.

For various reasons, we returned to Kent.

The people who own the lorries and depots do not live in the villages and have no regard for the inhabitants. It is all profit and gain.

When will the people of England awaken to the fact our countryside is being blighted by creeping building programmes and heavy lorry use all for the profit of the few and detriment of the many?

**John Coppin, West Malling**

## More will jump on board Ukip's ship

AGAIN, your editorial on the Ukip bandwagon is both excellent and very perceptive.

Clearly, the wagon is rolling fast and there will be many keen to join.

May I predict that at least five more Tory and at least two Labour MPs will jump ship before Easter?

Here in Dover, things are already on the move.

It is known that several Tory Dover councillors are ready to transfer for the very good reasons you list.

Furthermore, at least two Labour councillors on the town council have the seen the light and will transfer to Ukip by the May local election.

All the above know the problems as Dover is in the frontline and a victim of mass immigration.

They have not admitted all recent government have effectively betrayed Britain by giving away so many of our constitutional rights to unelected foreigners in Brussels.

No wonder so many are unhappy with the Westminster elite.

**Major F Jenkins, Dover**

## KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles which tie in with our parent company Archant's overall mission statement.

Archant's mission statement is: "We bring together motivated buyers and sellers through the creation of unique and compelling content and community expertise." This is summed up in the strapline 'Inspiring Communities'.

The way KoS will create our unique and compelling content is to follow these 10 principles: **Kent on Sunday will:**

- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.
- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between

news, comment and advertising.

- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to people living in the county.
- 9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.
- 10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.





## Deer at Knole Park, Sevenoaks

by **Amelia Gibbins, of Tunbridge Wells**

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By Steve Loader  
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

## Update

### Suzuki SX-4 Cross

Price:	£14,999
Driving appeal:	★★★★
Image:	★★★★
Space:	★★★★
Value:	★★★★
Reliability:	★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Best rival:	Nissan Qashqai

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KENT LIFE

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**QASHQAI THREAT:** Suzuki's more affordable SX4 S-Cross, main picture, is a big rival to Nissan's crossover; the Swift supermini, pictured top right, takes 30 per cent of Suzuki sales; the Japanese car manufacturer's five-door Splash, pictured bottom right, is small on the outside but big on the inside

# Suzuki... a brand that plays to its strengths

Flexible Japanese marque picks the sectors it wants to contest, concentrating on some well-priced smaller models and 4x4s

**S**UZUKI will add a new 1.2-litre petrol option to its excellent Swift supermini line-up early next year. On the face of it, this news looks as small as the compact Swift does itself, but the move shows the flexibility of a Japanese marque that never seeks to compete across the 'piste' with models in every sector, preferring instead to play to its strengths and target key opportunities.

The new Swift engine features Suzuki's 'Dualjet' twin fuel injector technology to boost the little car's economy and make possible an official combined 65.7mpg – a 16 per cent improvement over the current engine.

It will also bring down CO2 emissions to 99g/km, below the payable threshold for road tax – impressive for a petrol unit.

The Swift (from £10,799) has been a huge success since Suzuki created a more European version two generations ago, recognising that the long-running model name had previously been anything but swift in terms of technology, style or momentum.

It has since gained Sport and 4x4 options to increase its broad appeal and remains one of the best buys in

the supermini sector, and accounts for 30 per cent of Suzuki's UK sales – I know several motoring writers who own one.

Indeed, wider sales of the Swift are probably only now hampered by a relatively small dealer network, though that's set to change: the motor trade's National Franchised Dealer Association's summer dealer attitude survey voted Suzuki one of the UK's most sought-after franchises.

This dealership trend has been helped by Suzuki's obvious desire to move away from being a 4x4 specialist; for years it was best known for budget off-roaders like the legendary Jimny (from £11,995) – still the cheapest way to go 'yomping' across rough terrain – and Vitara series.

The former and the Grand Vitara (£15,995) continue to enjoy niche appeal and a new version of the latter is on the way, but wider acclaim beckons for another Suzuki all-wheel drive offering, the SX4 S-Cross.

Okay, so the model name doesn't roll off the tongue, but Nissan will know it all too well – this is a cut-price rival to its crossover star, the Qashqai.

Like the Nissan, the SX4 S-Cross is available with all-wheel drive but

also like the Qashqai, the best bargains are to be had with the front-wheel drive only versions, starting at £14,999.

That's terrific value for a car that fits the crossover SUV/family hatch/MPV mould nicely with a spacious cabin and decent load space – 430 litres (seats up) 875 litres (seats down).

As ever, a low entry price relies on buying the petrol option and doing your sums on economy and mileage versus the equivalent diesel.

But allowing for the optimism of the official economy figures, the 120PS (118bhp) 1.6-litre petrol with standard fit five-speed manual gearbox looks promising, with an official combined cycle reading of 51.3mpg. It will also hit 62mph in 11 seconds.

By contrast, the cheapest version with the identical output 1.6-litre diesel and six-speed box will set you back two grand more upfront, for an official combined 67.2mpg and 0-62mph in 12 seconds.

With its lower CO2 emissions, it will also cost you nothing in the first year for road tax and just £20 annually thereafter against the petrol's £105/year bill, but individual owners must calculate what suits them best.

## Other view...

### the Petrolhead

SUZUKI has a great motorcycle heritage but has struggled in the car sector. The brand looks to be getting there now, though.

### She says

I DO like the little Swift, but the SX4 looks a bit cumbersome to me up against the Qashqai and the Kia Sportage.

### the Eco-warrior

THE SX4 is well-priced with wide appeal and Suzuki's 4x4s are 'real world' – affordable for people who really need to off-road



**YOMPING ON A BUDGET:** The little Suzuki Jimny takes rough terrain all in its stride

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Official Government fuel consumption figures (Range): Urban cycle, Extra urban, Combined (litres per 100km/mpg) & CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km); Highest: New Citroën C4 Cactus PureTech 110 S&S manual Feel 5.8/48.7, 4/70.6, 4.7/60.1, 107. Lowest: New Citroën C4 Cactus BlueHDi 100 manual Touch 3.5/80.7, 2.9/97.4, 3.1/91.1, 82. MPG figures are achieved under official EU test conditions, intended as a guide for comparative purposes only, and may not reflect actual on-the-road driving conditions.



# Compact Citroën mixes old with new

French supermini plays the retro game but innovative windscreen shows it is a thoroughly modern competitor, too, much to the delight of **Steve Loader**

**F**ILM director Oliver Stone's thought-provoking 1990s sci-fi TV series *Wild Palms* enjoyed a mixed critical reception.

But there were memorable elements, notably the decision to populate the series' then futuristic 2007 dystopia with retro elements such as Rennie Mackintosh decor and architecture, Edwardian fashion and 'coke bottle and chrome' American cars of the 60s.

Sounds like Stone got one thing right – retro is the motoring future, as shown by many of today's cars that sample the past, the most obvious being the BMW Mini and Fiat 500.

But Citroën has played the game too by reviving the 1950s DS premium marque, while echoing the legendary 2CV with two generations of C3 supermini.

It's a key reason why the current C3 (from £11,075) launched in 2010, seems so ageless, helped by most versions having a unique and futuristic selling point for the supermini sector – a Zenith panoramic front windscreen that makes you feel as if you are piloting a light aircraft.

The clever part is that you don't have to endure the sun's worst on a bright day either, because there is an inner screen that pulls down and also houses conventional sun visors.

This fancy windscreen adds to an already glassy and classy cabin that makes the compact C3 seem even bigger than the decent head and legroom suggests.

It's certainly a vast improvement on the previous C3, which relied more on 2CV imagery and bonkers discounting, hopefully blinding motoring Francophiles to the car's cramped cabin, sloppy driving characteristics and poor build.

Citroën clearly saw the need to upgrade the C3 this time; generation two looks and feels much classier, with better interior materials, fit and

## Citroën C3 VTR+ VTi 82

Price:	£13,390
Driving appeal:	★★★★
Image:	★★★★
Space:	★★★★★
Value:	★★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★★
Reliability:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Road tax:	£30/year (zero year one)
Best rival:	Ford Grand C-Max

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finish, making it better able to deliver a bigger car feel for anyone down-sizing from a family hatchback or something bigger.

The way space inside has been engineered also endows it with one of the biggest boots in class (300 litres) and a nice wide opening, both despite the C3's modest dimensions.

Out on the road, the difference between the current car and its predecessor is even more noticeable: refinement is good and there is a far better balance of ride comfort and handling than before – many newer superminis cannot match the C3 here.



**PANORAMIC VIEWS:** Citroën C3's huge windscreen lets the outside in

However, it still has the French penchant for canting on the bends, despite its tenacious grip, though not quite the famous 'door-handle cornering' of the old 2CV.

Overall, it is a great all-rounder, with good motorway manners and light steering suited to town traffic – though 'press on' drivers will find it vague.

Engine-wise, there are some economical and smooth diesels in the mix, but previous experience reminds me how leaden they feel in this small car, so you are better off with the three-cylinder petrol units developed jointly with sister brand Peugeot and BMW.

The test car was the flagship VTR+ with a 1.2-litre three-pot unit. It has

the usual thrumming beat of that engine layout, but runs smoothly enough and feels lively too, although the official 0-62mph is a fairly modest 12.3 seconds.

But check out the official combined mpg and you realise that here is one petrol engine that need not feel inferior to a diesel – 61.4mpg.

It's also clean, with CO2 emissions only just falling shy of escaping road tax: 107g/km means you'll pay nothing in year one though and just £20 a year thereafter, at least until the next government (of whatever colour or persuasion) realises that its road tax bounty has dwindled away fast over the past few years as the drive for lower emissions has gathered momentum.

## FirstGEAR

Motoring news



## MX-5 MkIV in Paris

MAZDA'S fourth generation MX-5 two-seater is tipped to be the star of next month's Paris Motor Show – ahead of the car's arrival on UK roads in early 2015.

The newcomer retains the classic charms of its predecessors – balanced front engine/rear-wheel drive layout – but also incorporate the Japanese marque's suite of weight and fuel saving Skyactiv technologies.

Its unveiling coincides with the 25th anniversary year of the original MX-5.



## Special Soul mix

IT is now tradition for Kia's distinctive SUV-inspired Soul to be offered in eye-catching special editions – the latest being the Mixx and Maxx.

Priced from £18,150 and £19,950 respectively, they stand apart from the everyday MkII range with 18-inch alloys, urban styling pack and LED daytime running lights.

Standard kit also includes premium Infinity sound system, eight-inch touchscreen sat nav, leather upholstery, heated front seats and automatic air con.



## Bye 1, and hello 2

BMW has confirmed that its new 2 Series Convertible arrives here in February.

It replaces the 1 Series version – the world's most popular compact premium convertible – after the German marque reshuffled its numbering system so that all sporting models now wear an even number badge.

Prices start at £29,180, for the 220i Sport version and BMW claims an average of 18 per cent better fuel economy across the line-up.

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Amount of Credit	£18,810.97	Fixed Interest Rate	4.82%
Optional Purchase Payment†	£10,175.00	Representative APR	5.6%

Representative example: E220 CDI AMG Sport Auto

36 Monthly Payments of*	£399.00	Optional Purchase Payment†	£18,275.00
On The Road Price	£30,733.63	Total Amount Payable††	£34,913.00
Customer Deposit	£1,999.00	Acceptance Fee	£180.00
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Mercedes-Benz UK Ltd, Tongwell, Milton Keynes, MK15 8BA are the firm responsible for making this financial promotion and will act as introducing agent. Whilst this offer is only available through Mercedes-Benz Finance, we do arrange finance on behalf of other finance companies as well. Models featured are a Mercedes-Benz new E 220 CDI SE Saloon with manual transmission at £33,395.00 on-the-road including optional metallic paint at £645.00 & the New Mercedes-Benz B 180 SE with manual transmission at £22,535.00 on-the-road including optional metallic paint at £515.00. (On the road price includes VAT, delivery, 12 months' Road Fund Licence, number plates, first registration fee and fuel). <sup>^</sup>Free servicing available from participating retailers only, on a Mercedes-Benz Service Care Plan. Free Servicing based on 3 services over 36 months. \*Finance offer based on a B 180 CDI SE Eco and a E220 CDI AMG Sport on a Mercedes-Benz Agility Agreement (for details visit [www.mercedes-benz.co.uk](http://www.mercedes-benz.co.uk)) on 10,000 miles per annum. Excess mileage charges apply. †Payable if you exercise the option to purchase the car. ††Includes optional purchase payment, purchase activation fee and Retailer deposit contribution. Personal lease contract plan. Lookers Mercedes-Benz act as a credit broker and do arrange finance on behalf of other finance lenders. Alternative contract lengths available. Images featured include non-standard options not included in the finance example. Some combinations of features/options may not be available. Vehicles must be credit approved by between 28 August and 30 September 2014, registered by 31 December 2014. Credit provided subject to status from Mercedes-Benz Financial Services UK Ltd, MK15 8BA. Guarantees and indemnities may be required. Offer subject to availability and cannot be used in conjunction with any other published Retailer offers. Failure to make payments may affect your credit rating. Mercedes-Benz Ltd is a company registered in England and Wales with company number 2448457 and has its registered address at Tongwell, Milton Keynes MK15 8BA. Terms and conditions apply.



# main dealer Servicing



**CARE:** Stars like the Skoda Yeti SUV and Hyundai i10 city car are more reliable than past motors but still worth protecting with a full service history

**C**ONSUMERS often agonise more over their choice of car than their biggest ever investment – bricks and mortar.

With the decision made though, they often pay far less attention to looking after that new motor.

It is vital that the vehicle is serviced on time and repairs carried out promptly and competently.

The traditional guarantee was a full main dealer service history: a reassuring record that everything required for the manufacturer's warranty had been carried out.

But 2002 EU legislation decreed this was a restrictive practice, and banned carmakers from insisting that only franchised networks could uphold the warranty.

Manufacturers were also ordered to make vehicle diagnostics

## Your car's 'history' is not just for the record

information – crucial with increasingly sophisticated vehicles – specialist tools and updates available to independent garages and servicing centres.

Nevertheless, many car buyers and market gurus still say main dealer servicing is best for reliability and the part exchange or secondhand value of the car; used car buyers will usually pay a premium for a full main dealer service history (FMDSH), particu-

larly on sophisticated models.

Sceptics argue this perceived premium is erased by higher main dealer service costs, but manufacturers and their franchised networks have raised their game since the 2002 legislation.

Indeed, with car sales and profits squeezed during the economic downturn, dealers chose to be more competitive on servicing, customer service and ancillaries like tyres and exhausts – normally

the preserve of quick-fit centres.

They also bank on the perception that only main dealers' service technicians can know a brand's cars as well they do, while 'all makes' centres must spread expertise thinly across many makes and models.

And dealers know happy service customers keep coming back, each time seeing newer models just a few feet from the service desk – one day soon, they may buy again.



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DEALER NAME	DEALER

QTY	DESCRIPTION	UNIT PRICE	AMOUNT
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# To quick fit or not? That is the question

**A**S motoring costs soar, it's all too easy to try to cut corners at the local 'quick/fast-fit' centre. These specialist chains have blossomed as drivers try to save money on the biggest motoring 'consumables': exhausts, tyres, batteries, clutches, shock absorbers and routine services, plus the annual MOT.

But main dealers have not been sitting on their hands, reckoning that if car owners are still using their service bays, then they won't mind considering realistic deals on tyres and exhausts, for instance, to ensure a time-saving one-stop shop purchase.

Using the main dealer also guarantees that only genuine manufacturers' parts are used, bringing the confidence of additional quality and reliability.

And that same guarantee, plus realistic pricing has encouraged having bodyshop repairs done either by the franchise's own panel beaters and paintshop or one that gets its seal of approval.

Main dealers have also borrowed from their quick-fit rivals, by offering

menu pricing; this means that, like dining out, a customer can decide what he wants and knows in advance what it will cost – avoiding any motoring indigestion, when the bill is presented. Some dealers will even let you spread the cost via a finance or servicing scheme covering several years.

Others may also offer a loyalty scheme to keep owners of older models on their books rather than see them defect to the non-franchised sector, because those owners believe that the lower value of their car does not warrant the higher perceived cost of main dealer servicing.

Another trick borrowed from the quick-fit sector is longer working hours at main dealer service centres; dealers are much more aware that many customers want to drop off their car early on their way to work and then pick it up at the end of the day – a courtesy car may even be offered.

Bookings can often be made centrally too so that customers living midway between two franchised dealers within the same group can pick the most convenient service slots available.



**MONTHLY PAYMENTS:** You are probably buying a new car like the Peugeot 208, top picture, or Hyundai's i40 Tourer, pictured above, on monthly repayments, so why not roll the servicing costs into the same deal?

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**CHECK IT OUT:** The rough'n'tough AWD Skoda Octavia Scout, and smart Renault Clio and Alfa MiTo superminis all deserve looking after – it will pay off in the long run when you look to sell your car

**M**ODERN cars are far more forgiving and comfortable than even a few years ago. But the downside is that much less can be done by the DIY mechanic: keeping the car in reliable, correct and safe condition is now more of a job for the professional and, of course, it costs.

Unfortunately, this means owners often ignore problems and servicing is stretched beyond the recommended parameters, which also endangers the warranty and the provenance of the vehicle when you come to sell.

So, the golden rules are:

- Maintain the service record to the letter. Get it serviced at the correct mileages or annually and make sure the servicing book is stamped

## Car care really pays

up, although some motor marques are switching to centralised digital records so that a car's servicing record is always available if required.

- Read the warranty document thoroughly to ensure there are no possible pitfalls that could endanger the guarantee.
- Make sure you act on any recalls from the manufacturer for checks or replacements, even if they do not relate specifically to safety – it will help maintain the warranty and future saleability of the car.

- Don't rely on the MOT as insurance of the car's safety and reliability, even if has just passed with flying colours – problems can arise at any time and you should get them checked as soon as possible.
- Check lights regularly for safety and legality. Get used to 'Lighting up' in the garage or when you are nosed in or backed up to a wall.
- Check tyres – including the spare – monthly, and that includes the correct pressures as listed in the handbook or the sticker often

placed on the driver's side door frame. Though the legal tread depth is 1.6mm, most motoring authorities advise replacement at 2mm, especially in winter when icy and wet conditions can compromise grip.

- Keep oil, windscreen washer, coolant, power steering, clutch and brake fluid levels topped up without over-filling, and make those checks on level ground. Don't wait for warning lights to come on – it could be too late to prevent damage or compromise safety. Some cars have

an interim set of warning lights, but these can be an unwelcome reminder if you are in the middle of a long journey at the weekend and miles from a decent garage. Don't be caught out.

- Replace wiper blades. There is little point in keeping the washer topped up if the blades are worn or split. But if the windscreen is covered with bugs and grease, don't expect the washer and wipers to do the job for you – use a spray and some elbow grease.
- Shop around for servicing. Even if you are committed to main dealer servicing, it does not mean you have to go back to the one where you bought the car – some are better on pricing and customer service than others.

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PEUGEOT





## Let the warranty wars begin

**N**EW cars are covered by a warranty. For years, the standard was three years and/or 60,000 miles, but a recent outbreak of 'warranty wars' between the carmakers have seen both the years and mileages increase.

That's a good enough reason for car buyers to shop around anyway, but some of the new deals also reinforce the old adage to check the small print.

This will confirm exactly what the manufacturer will and will not pay for if the car breaks down within the

agreed time period or mileage.

And this makes it imperative that the car owner also sticks to the rules by keeping the car serviced according to the warranty, also taking note of and acting upon any recall notices for unforeseen faults and problems.

Some brands are more lenient about late servicing than others, but a common pitfall is to have the car serviced only by mileage, when most manufacturers also insist that the car is serviced annually if the required miles are not being covered. Fact is, an underused car or one

that does lots of short hops, can need as much attention as one that covers 'starship miles' on the motorway.

You don't have to use a franchised dealer for servicing – this stipulation was thrown out by EU legislation in 2002 – but do check for caveats in any case.

Be aware also that some marques offer the chance to extend the warranty for a reasonable cost or will 'wind back' the warranty clock to start again if you buy an approved used example from one of their dealers – not a bad option.



**ANNUAL OR MILEAGE?** If a car like the Renault Captur or Skoda Citigo doesn't cover enough miles, then it should be serviced annually anyway

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### PROMOTIONAL ADVERT OF THE WEEK



**ANN**, young looking 40yrs seeks broadminded man of any age/location for no strings discreet times, games and more. ACA. BOX NUMBER 412369

**TRACY** 35yr busty bubbly out there sized 18 lady looking for a caring loving guy who appreciates womanly curves, over indulgences and having fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414189

**SALLY**, 36yrs, married but husband works away seeks discreet gent any age for fun only. Text only Box: 4492484

**MARY** tall blonde size 12 lady, nice personality, good conversationalist, varied and open to interests, loves weekends away/holidays, seeking similar male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414179

**GILLY**, voluptuous well groomed lady, seeks man to massage and pamper. Married exciting men please apply. Tel No: 0905 002 1933 Box No: 412933

**SLIM** tall, elegant, feminine, N/S, solvent lady, young 50's, likes travel, red wine, seeks tall, sincere, military, retired, professional gentleman of high calibre. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414251

**PHILLY**, 20yrs, just left college, seeks older man for daytime fun, must be discreet as she has strict parents. Text only Box: 4492485

**WIDOW** late 60's, likes most things, seeking a lonely gent, 70-75 to make me love and laugh again. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414093

**ANN**, young looking 40yrs seeks broadminded man of any age/location for no strings discreet times, games and more. ACA. Tel No: 0905 002 1937 Box No: 412369

**FEMALE** seeking male for adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413809

**LINDY**, 43yrs young, married with husband away. Seeks discreet gent any age/area for no strings. Box 4459439 Text only

**68YR** old widow, seeking company of a male, 68-75 for friendship, likes cinema, theatre, nights in, meals out, seaside walks. Wants someone to help me love again. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413689

**BBW** 51, caring, solvent, seeks male of similar age for fun times and socialising. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413621

**JENNI**, sensual lady, 23yrs seeks mature experienced man for no strings, daytime fun. Box 4459440 Text only

**FEMALE** 38, attractive, African, single mum, seeks male, 35-50 for nights out, socialising, friendship and fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412793

**PETITE** slim blonde 39yrs, pretty big blue eyes, looking for similar easygoing older male to put a spark back into my life, enjoys nights in/out and more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412327

**WIDOW** 70, lonely, seeking gent, 70-75 to bring a bit of sparkle back in life, likes theatre, cinema. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412475

**KATIE** 26yr old pretty slim blue eyed blonde looking for evening entertainment with open-minded discreet guy, any age. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412319

**JANE** 29yr old horsey female, loves the outdoors, cycling, as well as duvet days, WLTm not too serious male for a hopefully normal relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412315

**MARY** 5ft 6in size 12 blonde, nice personality, good conversationalist, interesting, lots of interests WLTm ikeminded caring, happy male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412169

**CLARE** 36yrs successful single mum, independent, employed with OHAC, size 10, green eyes, pretty, likes swimming, family life, seeking male with similar values and interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412053

**64YR** old lady, seeking male for friendship, companionship, outings and interesting conversation. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411975

**SHARON** 32yrs and still soul searching for Mr Right, I enjoy keeping in shape, caring for people, seeking loving respectful guy who also knows a good time. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412049

**SLIM** petite, attractive brunette, 56, British/Russian origin, excellent cook/home maker, seeks cultured male for serious relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412129

**FREYA** 33 6ft blonde, loves dancing and have a good time, employed, own home, one son, seeking similar laidback guy/dad for dates, chats and more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412045

**MARILYN** really nice curly tactile female, loves romantic walks, cosy nights in, quality times, looking for nice male to spend time and fall in love with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411871

**JAN** 5ft 6ins, dark hair/eyes, nice smile, likes music, travel, countryside, animals, employed, OHAC, looking for companionship with similar lonely heart. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411865

**33YR** old sick of being single working mum, OHAC, likes the simple things in life, looking for romantic, honest guy with GSOH for cosy nights in and fun nights out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411887

**REMEMBER:** Calls cost £1.53 per minute plus network extras.

mydate24

**LOCAL** man looking for fun friendship poss more gosh. Wltm lady 35 - 45 reply if interested. Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4334837

**39YR** old guy, 6ft 2ins, slim-medium build, seeking female for no strings fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414259

**JAMES**, 45yrs, solvent caring gent, recently divorced seeks genuine lady to wine and dine. Single mums welcome. Box 4459441 Text only

**LADY** companion 60-70 wanted for elderly gent, likes travel with property abroad. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414133

**AMABLE** intelligent male, 77, light smoker, seeks slim lady for friendship/companionship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413127

**MATURE** male, looking for discreet meetings with female. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413039

**FRANK** 54, 5ft 10ins, blue eyes, blond hair, smoker, seeking friendship with mature female, 40-60. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412893

**67YR** old male, slim, 5ft 5ins, interests, likes holidays, meals out, seeking slim female 55-65 with GSOH to share TLC. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414023

**BLUE** eyed male, fit, toned, likes socialising, travel, OHAC, seeks female, 40-56 for loving, caring relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413981

**MALE** seeking Asian female, any age, outgoing, likes outdoors for fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413965

**SARAH** 25 petite slim attractive blonde student, enjoys keeping fit, looking good, socialising, going out, being a mum WLTm similar fun genuine guy. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411537

**JULIE** attractive outgoing female with a very young attitude, loves running, living life, travel, WLTm someone special to make my life complete, hope you're out there. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411513

**LINDA** 37, green eyes, attractive, bubbly size 12, enjoys cosy nights in, text chats, seeking tallish fun guy for meals out, pubs, clubs and spending quality times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411033

**CAROLINE** 39yr old pretty blonde looking for handsome caring man to put the sparkle back into my life and make each other feel special. Call me. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411891

**33YR** old sick of being single working mum, OHAC, likes the simple things in life, looking for romantic, honest guy with GSOH for cosy nights in and fun nights out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411887

**45YR** old male, likes poetry, seeks companion for relationship, Herne Bay area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411993

**CHIPS** on the pier, walks on the beach/countryside, GSOH, 58yrs old, fit male, seeks female for laughs and love and whatever. Ne Kent. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411725

**MALE** 5ft 11ins, good-looking, athletic build, looking for discreet fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411477

**DEREK** seeking female, 50-60 for company, friendship and have fun together. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411433

**MALE** 49, attractive, fit, spontaneous, good company, no ties, seeking likeminded lady for the road ahead, nights in and out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411309

**RAY** 63, 5ft 10ins, slim, semi-retired, seeking no strings discreet meets for adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411447

**WORLD** war veteran seeking happy lady with nice conversation in the Kent area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411133

**IAN** 5ft 11ins, likes rock/roll, singing, making people laugh, seeking someone special. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412799

**WRITER** tall, slim, dark hair, generous, seeking broadminded lady for fun times. Any age/status. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412749

**BARRY** divorced, 6ft, well built, seeking fun time girl for good times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412717

**MALE** seeking friendship of mature woman, smoker. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412703

**BROWN** eyed white mature, handsome male, seeking black female, 18-50 for discreet no strings adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410377

**SINGLE** young lady, slim-medium build, 24-38 sought by mature male in Canterbury. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405697

**MALE** 48, looking for fun loving female to enjoy outdoor activities, nights in and meals out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392212

**JAMES** young, free and single, please give me a call if interested. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412345

**EX** headmaster, tall, dark, seeks adventurous lady, status unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412263

**MALE** 49, 5ft 10ins, likes cinema, reading, walks, seeks female in the Thanet area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412235

**BESIDE** the Pointe. Literate self-possessing, legginess, kindred spirit sought by white male for elevating the bar. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412223

**45YR** old male, likes poetry, seeks companion for relationship, Herne Bay area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411993

**CHIPS** on the pier, walks on the beach/countryside, GSOH, 58yrs old, fit male, seeks female for laughs and love and whatever. Ne Kent. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411725

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**WRITER** tall, slim, dark hair, generous, seeking broadminded lady for fun times. Any age/status. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412749

**BARRY** divorced, 6ft, well built, seeking fun time girl for good times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412717

**MALE** seeking friendship of mature woman, smoker. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412703

**BROWN** eyed white mature, handsome male, seeking black female, 18-50 for discreet no strings adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410377



**Who's caught your eye?** Let them know you might be interested by sending them a WINK ...

**WINK 2** Advert box no. Then send to 80098

**MALE** likes outdoor life, smoker, seeking local female for cosy nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410755

**BRIAN** 70, Maidstone, seeking female, 60 plus, likes meals out, cinema, theatre, days out and cosy nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410611

**DEREK** 5ft 11ins, slim-medium build, loving, caring, seeking black lady for possible relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410511

**EARLY** 50's single male, smoker, seeking likeminded female for company and to share life. Must have GSOH, like animals, walks, home made food and nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410441

**41YR** old male, dark hair, 5ft 11ins, easy going, likes music, guitar, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410411

**PHIL** 6ft, clean shaven, blue eyes, smart, likes sports, walks, films, theatre, music, animals, GSOH, seeks female, 40-55 for fun and friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410351

**RETIRED** male, fit, active, seeks no strings discreet meet with female, any age and size. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410343

ADVENTUROUS male, mid 50's,



**CHRIS** widower likes DIY, gardening, nights out, rock and roll, N/S, looking for LTR with female. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410191

**ATTRACTIVE** white gent, 48, 56ft, romantic, easy going, GSOH, seeking young lady, 60-75 for quality discreet fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410025

**DIVORCED** male, seeks Oriental lady, likes animals, music, will take care of you forever. Thanet area, willing to travel. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409963

**PROFESSIONAL** male, early 40's, fun loving, OHAC, seeks warm, sincere female for LTR. Animals/children welcome. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409961

**CANTERBURY** mature male, medium build, GSOH, varied interests, sign language interpreter, seeks slim-medium build female, 24-42 for LTR. Single male welcome. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405697

**PROFESSIONAL** male, early 40's, fun loving, independent, OHAC, seeks warm, sincere, fun loving female for LTR. Animals/children welcome. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409745

**TALL** black male, 45, likes meals out, good company, romantic, GSOH, light hearted, seeks easy-going female. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409621

**RETIRED** male, seeks no strings discreet meets with slim-medium build female, any age for adult fun. Dover. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409533

**MALE** seeking attractive female for discreet fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409189

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CALL CHARGES\*: DATING 18+ and have the bill payer's permission. 090 calls cost £1.53 per min. plus network charges. Calls from Mobiles will be considerably higher. Calls are recorded and may appear on your bill. TEXT\*: Text alerts are charged at £1.50 per week. To unsubscribe to text alerts, text DATING STOP to 63333. To cancel free match alerts, text STOP to 0781474042. For full T&Cs go to www.localdates-terms.co.uk/. REPLY BY TEXT\*: 80098 costs £1.50 per SMS received (max 150 characters). Guaranteed to receive 1 - 4 messages for each message you send. Service only available where phone icon show. Messages are moderated. Minimum 7 messages must be sent before contact details can be exchanged. This service is not computer generated. All messages are responded to by real service users. No meetings can be guaranteed. If arranging a meeting be sure to choose a public space and do not give personal details to people you have not met. Some advertisers on this page come from our national database. To STOP text stop to 80098. Service provided by No Goats Ltd. Help: 0207 720 7130. ALL SERVICES\*: By texting any shortcode you consent to the owner of that shortcode sending you the occasional marketing message. DATA PROTECTION: Service provided by JMedia UK Ltd, SW4 7BX, 0207 720 7130. We will collect the details you provide and may send you details of other services and events operated by us. We may pass your details onto this newspaper for marketing or PhonePayPlus for regulatory purposes. W/C 21/09/14





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**Care Staff**

CUMBRIA HOUSE CARE HOME  
requires  
**Senior Night  
Care Assistant**  
For Monday and Tuesday nights 8pm – 8am.  
Must have NVQ/QCF Level 3 in Health & Social care  
and have experience in position of senior care assistant  
Position is subject to Enhanced DBS check,  
cost to be met by applicant  
For more information, please contact  
**Julia or Cathy on 01303 254019**

**Drivers**

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Great opportunity for permanent class 1  
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Potential earnings of £35,000 +  
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CPCS card.  
Full PPE & uniform provided.  
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or telephone 01322 341166

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**Spencer**  
PRIVATE HOSPITALS

Spencer Private Hospitals are two hospitals situated in East Kent. The larger of the two hospitals is a 22 bed independent hospital situated at the QEOM Hospital in Margate, whilst the second hospital is a 4 bed independent hospital based at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford. Both hospitals have a reputation for providing excellent medical and surgical facilities supported by Specialist Consultants, Specialist Nurses and Physiotherapists. We have state of the art diagnostic equipment and exceptionally high standards of nursing care.

The continuing growth of our business has resulted in vacancy for the following staff:

**MARKETING ASSISTANT - DOVER**  
Full time Hours: 37.5 per week Closing date: 26/09/2014  
Salary: £20,000 per annum

Qualifications

- Maths and English GCSE A-C or equivalent
- 12 months experience working in a marketing administration environment
- Social Media and Email Marketing experience essential
- Experience of Google Analytics and Adwords
- SEO and PPC experience desirable
- Experience using Umbraco, or other CMS, and MailChimp desirable

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact:  
Justine Whittle, Marketing Assistant, on 01304 245943 or at  
[justine.whittle@spencerhospitals.com](mailto:justine.whittle@spencerhospitals.com)

For a job description and application form please visit  
[www.spencerprivatehospitals.com/careers](http://www.spencerprivatehospitals.com/careers)  
Alternatively, please contact Emily Fraser, HR Assistant  
Telephone: 01304 245951  
E-mail: [recruitment@spencerhospitals.com](mailto:recruitment@spencerhospitals.com)

Spencer Private Hospital is an equal opportunity employer  
This position is subject to a Disclosure and Barring check

**Swale Academies Trust**

**Westlands School**  
Westlands Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1PF

**Teaching Assistants**  
Required for immediate start  
Salary £13,512 - £16,468 (pro rata)  
(equal to £8,155 to £9,940 pa depending on experience)  
27.08 hours per week, worked over 5 days, term time only,  
supporting pupils in mainstream classes.

Applicants should have the necessary skills to support pupils who have various difficulties in mainstream classes, in small groups or on an individual basis. A particular interest in the areas of mathematics, science or humanities would be an advantage. Candidates would be expected to have good literacy and numeracy skills, and as part of the interview, may be asked to demonstrate their skills in supporting pupils.

Recruitment packs are available from Westlands School or online ([www.westlands.org.uk](http://www.westlands.org.uk)). Please note that we cannot accept CVs without an application form. Applicants should include a letter of application detailing how they meet the requirements of the person specification. Closing date: Friday 26 September 2014 at noon.

*Swale Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check.*

**Contact Details**  
Tel: 01795 477475 Fax: 01795 479461  
Email [swa@westlands.kent.sch.uk](mailto:swa@westlands.kent.sch.uk)  
Headteacher: Mr S Cox MA  
Trust Principal: Mr J Whitcombe MA

Swale Academies Trust Company No 7344732  
Registered Office: Ashdown House, Johnson Road, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1JS

**ABC AVENUE BUILDING COMPANY**  
Specialists in Healthcare Construction

**Experienced Buyer/Surveyor**  
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in paper, online and  
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**jobs24.co.uk /mobile**



## BRADSTOW SCHOOL

Bradstow is a creative and unique residential school for children between the ages of 5 & 19. It is situated in 13 acres of parkland just a few hundred metres from the sandy beaches of Broadstairs. We seek to meet the needs of children and young people with autism and severe learning difficulties with associated behaviours that may be challenging. We have achieved national recognition for our developments in Communication and Behaviour Management.

### QCF ASSESSOR

To deliver vocational qualifications, coaching and assessment of learners in accordance with the National Standards using a range of assessment methods. The successful candidate will hold a Childcare Qualification Level III or above, the A1 Assessor Award with QCF Update and PTTLs.

**£20,726 - £22,314 per annum - 37 hours per week – Term Time Only, plus 2 weeks\***

**\*For these roles there will also be up to a maximum of two weeks for the school's respite care provision if required, for which extra payment would be paid.**

For all posts we look for candidates who are mature, warm, creative and open to learning with a patient and caring attitude to deal sensitively with vulnerable children.

We are committed to sustainability and preserving the environment and therefore encourage applications by email, so for an application form and information pack please email [personnel@bradstow.wandsworth.sch.uk](mailto:personnel@bradstow.wandsworth.sch.uk). Or you may call 01843 608727 (24 hour recruitment answer machine).

Please note that CVs will not be considered.

**The closing date for all applications is 5pm Thursday 25th September 2014.**



## Westlands School

Westlands Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1PF

A member of Swale Academies Trust

### SCIENCE TECHNICIAN

Required for November 2014

35 hours per week, term time only

**Salary starting at £16,468 - £17,302 pa (pro-rata) (equal to £12,846- £13,497)**

We seek to appoint a suitably qualified Science Technician who will be responsible for providing technical support in science subjects (KS3, KS4, A Level, BTEC) and to coordinate the use of practical resources and facilities in the Science Department.

Applicants should have knowledge of COSHH and relevant science qualification. Previous experience of working in a Science department, School or commercial laboratory would be useful.

Duties will include:

- running trials of experiments prior to classes and then demonstrating techniques for experiments;
- preparing equipment and chemicals before lessons – from test tubes to microscopes;
- maintaining and repairing equipment and laboratory apparatus;
- ensuring that equipment is properly cleaned and that chemicals and other materials are appropriately stored;
- ensuring that all health and safety procedures are understood and followed correctly;

**Ofsted 2012**

**Achievement is outstanding | Teaching is outstanding | Behaviour is outstanding | Leadership is outstanding**

Recruitment packs are available from Westlands School or online ([www.swaleacademiestrust.org.uk](http://www.swaleacademiestrust.org.uk)). Please note, we cannot accept CVs without an application form. Closing date: 26 September 2014 (noon). Interviews will take place in the week beginning 29 September 2014

Swale Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check.

#### Contact Details

Tel: 01795 477475 Fax: 01795 479461 Email [swa@westlands.kent.sch.uk](mailto:swa@westlands.kent.sch.uk)

Headteacher: Mr S Cox MA Trust Principal: Mr J Whitcombe MA

Swale Academies Trust Company No 7344732

Registered Office: Ashdown House, Johnson Road, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1JS



## BRADSTOW SCHOOL

### DEPUTY HEAD OF CARE

Bradstow School is a residential special school situated in Broadstairs, Kent and it is maintained by the London Borough of Wandsworth. Bradstow School recognises the importance of supporting, training and developing its staff to enable them to deliver an outstanding service for children and young people.

A Deputy Head of Care is required to lead and supervise the childcare provision of the registered children's home provision for the children and young people who currently attend Bradstow School. The successful candidate will have proven managerial and leadership skills, and a knowledge of supporting children and young people with learning disabilities, autism and associated challenging behaviours.

The Deputy Head of Care will be a member of the Senior Leadership Team and will contribute to the continuous improvement of the school and actively promote and model the vision, values and mission of the school community.

The successful candidate will have achieved QCF Level 5 (Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care and Children and Young People Services), or equivalent, or a willingness to successfully complete within 18 months of commencement of employment.

**£34,894 - £37,578 per annum (plus sleeping in allowance) – 41 hours per week.  
Term Time Only, plus 2 weeks.**

If you want to work within a creative and dynamic team who really make a difference to the lives of the children and young people at Bradstow School, and you want to help lead this exciting provision, then this is the opportunity for you.

We are committed to sustainability and preserving the environment and therefore encourage applications by email. For an application form and information pack please email [personnel@bradstow.wandsworth.sch.uk](mailto:personnel@bradstow.wandsworth.sch.uk). Or you may call 01843 608727 (24 hour recruitment answer machine).

Please note that CVs will not be considered.

**The closing date for all applications is 5pm Thursday 25th September 2014.**



## "We grow people"

Abbey Court School provides a stimulating, challenging and safe learning environment where pupils and staff efforts, work and achievement are celebrated.

**We are currently looking for a**

### Music Therapist

**to join and enhance our high calibre team**

**Medway Scale B2 – point 32 to 41 (£27,323 to £34,894)**

**(5 days per week, term time only - pro rata)**

Abbey Court School is currently located on 2 sites; Rainham (Nursery and Primary) and Strood (Secondary and Further Education), and caters for pupils aged 3-19 with Severe Learning Difficulties. We are looking for an enthusiastic and experienced Music Therapist, with a professional and flexible approach. In essence, somebody with an interest in an educational setting who would like to work in a school committed to enabling pupils to reach their full potential. The postholder will be offered the opportunity to express their creativity, work holistically and demonstrate their strengths whilst undertaking a wide variety of tasks within the post.

Working hours are 37 hours p/w, term time only. Candidates should hold a relevant Music Therapy qualification. The successful candidate will work as part of a larger therapy team, alongside Physiotherapist, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist and Art Therapist. Benefits include: Local Authority pension scheme, induction training, performance management programme and Continuous Professional Development. Visits to the school are welcomed.

Due to the conditions and complex needs of the pupils at Abbey Court School, continuity and consistency of support is paramount and therefore candidates for all positions will need to commit to the full working hours of the post.

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Any offer of appointment for post is subject to a satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure.

**Closing Date: 26th September 2014**

For an application pack, or to make an appointment to visit, please contact Mrs Linda Taylor, Business Manager, Abbey Court School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent, ME2 3SP (01634 338236), stating the position for which you are applying.

**Please note CV's will not be accepted**



Spencer Private Hospitals are two hospitals situated in East Kent. The larger of the two hospitals is a 22 bed independent hospital situated at the QEOM Hospital in Margate, whilst the second hospital is a 4 bed independent hospital based at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford. Both hospitals have a reputation for providing excellent medical and surgical facilities supported by Specialist Consultants, Specialist Nurses and Physiotherapists. We have state of the art diagnostic equipment and exceptionally high standards of nursing care.

The continuing growth of our business has resulted in vacancies for the following staff

### DEPUTY THEATRE LIAISON MANAGER - MARGATE

**Full Time - Hours: 37.5 - Salary: £34K - £38K**

- Registered Nurse or Operating Department Practitioner
  - Five years relevant experience in Theatre
- Evidence of Continual Professional Development
- Experience of managing a team
- Sound knowledge of Clinical Governance and Risk Management
- A working knowledge of CQC regulations and requirements
  - Ability to manage a Theatre department

### ENDOSCOPY MANAGER - MARGATE

**Full Time (Part Time Considered) - Hours: 37.5**

**Salary: £30K - £36K pa or pro rata for part-time**

- Registered Nurse Part 1 or equivalent ODP qualification
- In depth knowledge of CFPP 01-06
- Knowledge of GRS/JAG Accreditation
- Two years experience in Managerial Endoscopy role
- Skilled in all endoscopy procedures and processes
- A Working knowledge of CQC regulations and requirements

### ENDOSCOPY PRACTITIONERS (RGN/ODP) - MARGATE

**Full or Part time - Hours: Various - Salary: £25,000 pa or pro rata for part time**

We are looking for enthusiastic, experienced, highly motivated endoscopy staff at all levels, with a flexible approach to working. Hours will include evenings and weekends

- Registered Nurse or Operating Department Practitioner
  - Relevant experience working in an Endoscopy Unit
- Knowledge of research and evidence-based practice
- Experienced in Recovery and Anaesthetics
  - Skilled in scope cleaning and decontamination processes
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## LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

### PUBLIC NOTICE

#### Application for New Premises Licence

We Salomons UK Ltd hereby give notice that we have made an application to the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council c/o The Licensing Partnership Sevenoaks, The Council Offices, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1HG for grant of a new premises licence to:

1. To permit the provision of alcohol between the hours of 10.00 and 21.30
2. To provision of regulated entertainment between the hours of 10.00 and 22.00
3. For a period not exceeding 49 days between 1st November and 31st December in any given year

In respect of the premises situated at Salomons Centre, David Salomons Estate, Broomhill Road, Tunbridge Wells TN3 0TG and to be known by the sign of Father Christmas World

The application can be viewed at the offices of the Licensing Authority, Tunbridge Borough Council, Town Hall, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 1RS between 9.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m – Monday to Friday (except public holidays) or [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk)

Any representations against this application must be made in writing and received by the Licensing Service at the above address, by no later than 9th October 2014

Any person may make representations on licensing objectives grounds only i.e. **the prevention of crime and disorder, the prevention of public nuisance, public safety and the protection of children from harm.** Copies of all representations will be sent to the applicant. It is an offence, under section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003, to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in or in connection with an application for premises licence and the maximum fine on being convicted of such an offence is £5000.

Stephen Thomas LAW,  
8, Grassmere, Leybourne, Kent ME19 5QP  
Authorised Agents for and on behalf of the applicant

### PUBLIC NOTICE

#### Application for Variation of Premises Licence

We Lashings World X1 Ltd hereby give notice that we have made an application to the Maidstone Borough Council c/o The Licensing Partnership Sevenoaks, The Council Offices, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1HG variation of the premises licence to:

1. To extend the covered terraced area of the premises as shown on the plans deposited with this application
2. To remove the dwarf wall at the entrance to the premises as shown on the deposited plan
3. To improve existing fire exits and doorways
4. To remove condition 2 of Annex 2 as it is superfluous.

In respect of the premises situated at 81, Upper Stone Street, Maidstone Kent ME15 6HE and known by the sign of Lashings

The application can be viewed at the offices of the Licensing Authority, Maidstone Borough Council, Maidstone House King Street, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6JQ between 9.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m – Monday to Friday (except public holidays) or [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk)

Any representations against this application must be made in writing and received by the Licensing Service at the above address, by no later than 7th October 2014

Any person may make representations on licensing objectives grounds only i.e. **the prevention of crime and disorder, the prevention of public nuisance, public safety and the protection of children from harm.** Copies of all representations will be sent to the applicant. It is an offence, under section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003, to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in or in connection with an application for premises licence and the maximum fine on being convicted of such an offence is £5000.

Stephen Thomas LAW, 8, Grassmere, Leybourne, Kent ME19 5QP  
Authorised Agents for and on behalf of the applicant

## PLANNING



### THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2010

The following applications have been submitted for consideration by the Council:

**Y14/0988/SH** - 143 Sandgate High Street Sandgate Folkestone Kent CT20 3DA - Installation of replacement rear dormer window together with other external alterations.

**Y14/0898/SH** - 154 Sandgate Road Folkestone Kent CT20 2HU - Works to a Griselinia tree situated within a conservation area comprising the reduction in height to a minimum of 4 metres

**Y14/0927/SH** - Seapoint Car Park Princes Parade Hythe Kent - Continued stationing of existing storage containers in connection with the use by the Seapoint Canoe Centre for a temporary period of 3 years.

**Y14/0982/SH** - 11 The Bayle Folkestone Kent CT20 1SQ - Listed Building Consent to demolish internal wall between existing kitchen and adjoining cupboard; installation of new bathroom on 1st floor and installation of damp proofing at ground floor.

**Y14/0260/SH** - 43 Sandgate Road Folkestone Kent CT20 1RZ - Installation of a new air conditioning unit, safety railings and access ladder to first floor rear elevation and other external alterations.

Any representations should be made in writing to the Head of Planning, Shepway District Council, Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2QY or emailed to [planning@shepway.gov.uk](mailto:planning@shepway.gov.uk). Comments should be made in writing within 21 days from the date of publication. It should be noted that any representations received will be made available for public inspection.

Some applications can be viewed at other locations in addition to the Civic Centre, Folkestone. The applications are marked as follows:

# - The One Stop Shop, Magpies, Church Approach, New Romney

+ - Hythe Town Council Offices, Stade Street, Hythe

Note: This is not a full list of applications received. All planning applications can be viewed and comments made online at <http://searchplanapps.shepway.gov.uk/online-applications/>.

The applications marked (\*) do not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area in which the land to which the application relates is situated.

C Lewis, Head of Planning  
Shepway District Council

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A weekend of high drama as Invicta Dynamos top the table after National Ice Hockey League faces off



**ICE AN EASY:** Invicta Dynamos hit the season running with wins over Oxford City Stars and the Bracknell Hornets

# Improvements are needed but Mos get off to winning start

**I**NVICTA Dynamos sit on top of the NIHL South Division 1 table after winning their opening two games of the season at the weekend.

They got things going by beating newly-promoted Oxford City Stars 9-7 at the Silver Blades in Gillingham.

Andy Smith was in electric form in front of goal, scoring four times, while Danny Terry, Adam McNicoll, Steve Osman, Juraj Huska and Calum Fowler also all found the net.

Two points for the Dynamos in

their opening fixture was all they could have hoped for, but in truth the match looked very much like the early-season encounter that it was, the team's finest play only really being shown in glimpses.

Head coach Kevin Parrish was happy, though, to take the victory while developing an understanding of where improvements need to be made.

Man-of-the-match awards went to Darren Elliott of Oxford and four-goal star Smith of the Mos.

The following evening in Berkshire, a last-gasp Juraj Huska goal snatched a 7-6 victory for the Dynamos over Bracknell Hornets.

In an extraordinary match, Mos assembled a 5-2 lead before somehow contriving to fall 6-5 behind.

Fowler then completed his hat-trick to level at 6-6 before the Slovak fired the winner from a seemingly impossible distance.

The other Dynamos scorers were Smith (2) and Nicky Lewis.

It had been quite a weekend!



# Success follows success as faultless teen golfer claims champion's crown

MARK Collins has become the first Kent golfer in 24 years to win the English Men's County Champion of Champions Tournament.

He upstaged his more fancied rivals over the Hotchkiss Course at Woodhall Spa.

The 19-year-old, from the Chart Hills club, carded a four-under-par 69 in the second round and a five-under tally of 141, finishing two strokes ahead of Durham champion Richard Aisbitt and Martin Young from Hampshire.

It was Collins's second major win of the season, following his victory in the Tillman Trophy at East Sussex National, while his success denied Hampshire a clean sweep after the boys and senior titles were won by the south coast county.

"This win means all the hard work I've put in has paid off and hopefully will lead to bigger things," said Collins.

"It's been a while since a Kent player won this, which is surprising as we've had a bunch of good players in recent years.

"But I fancied my chances. I have been working with professional Jason Barnes at my club and I have beaten him a couple of times, so I came here confident.



"This afternoon I didn't make any mistakes. I didn't drop a shot and just kept the ball on the fairways. It's my first time at Woodhall Spa and this is a really challenging course. It makes you think all the way round."

Bob Sloman was the last Kent player to win the Men's County Champions title sharing it in 1990 with Lincolnshire's Paul Streeter.

So Collins went one better this time, his four birdies being joined by 14 pars on a perfect card.



**STRIDING OUT:** Entries to take part in this month's Folkestone Rotary Half Marathon are continuing to come in

## Hundreds ready to put their best foot forward

REGISTRATIONS continue to stack up for this month's Folkestone Rotary Half Marathon.

Race director Ray Johnson said: "We now have over 250 entries to date, which is fantastic and we still have entries coming in thick and fast.

"The main charities that this year's event will be supporting are Step Short and The Gurkha Memorial Fund and runners also have the opportunity to raise money for their chosen charity.

"It is possible to enter online at [www.nice-work.org.uk](http://www.nice-work.org.uk) or turn up on the day, although pre-registration is recommended.

"We have many entrants from

London, and some from further afield, as well as local runners from various Kent running clubs.

"The youngest runner registered is four and the oldest is 76 – there is no maximum age.

"We would encourage everyone to promote this event as much as possible as not only is it great for running enthusiasts but also family, friends and public alike.

"Last year we raised over £38,000 for good causes and we are hoping to exceed this amount this year.

"We are confident that this year we will be able to reach over £250,000 in total raised since the event was started in 2006.

"We encourage early registrations, which you can access through the website. Runners are able to enter on the day at The Grand from 8.30am to 9.30am.

"We welcome the public to spectate and support the runners."

The winning man and lady will each receive £100, sponsored by Independent Insurance Services. There will also be prizes and medals for various categories.

There will be a children's race, so everyone can join in.

The Folkestone Rotary Half Marathon starts at 10am on Sunday, September 28. The children's race is at 10.30am.

NTW

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**LOOKING AHEAD:** Raoul Owens knows a strong showing is important

## Owens looks to end season on a high

PEMBURY racer Raoul Owens is determined to end his second year at European level on a high at Germany's Nürburgring this weekend.

The world-famous circuit hosts the eagerly-awaited finale of the Formula Renault 2.0 Northern European Cup (NEC) season and Owens doesn't intend to miss out.

With confidence the greatest it has been all season for the 20-year-old Kent racer, having secured his maiden Formula Renault pole position and a career-best second place last time out at Most in the Czech Republic, he is aiming for nothing less than a clutch of silverware this time.

Going into the final weekend just a single point outside the coveted championship top 10, the Mark Burdett Motorsport driver wants to score as heavily as possible to not only conclude the season with a flourish but to also undo some of the damage done earlier in the year when hit by misfortune.

"I need to try to score as many points as I can to make up some of what we lost out on earlier in the season – we've been caught up in other people's incidents too many times this year and that's had a big impact", said the Pembury racer.

"It's so important to be away from

the mid-pack. We need to start as high up the order as we can at Nürburgring and then try and get another podium, finishing one place better than we did in Most, and getting that first win would be a good way to end the season."

"I know the track from the Eurocup outing and we did well there speed-wise – we just got caught up in the races unfortunately.

"We've had enough track time there, so the key will be to get a good qualifying to boost us up the grid – that's so important.

"The weekend will be my last with Mark [Burdett] and it would obviously be really nice to end the season on a high together.

"The team's commitment has always been there, we've just had some bad luck along the way, but the guys have done a great job.

"Coming off such a good result last time out boosts everyone – we know it's possible now and we have what it takes to be right at the front."

With his eye on a move up the single-seater ladder next year, and discussions already taking place regarding the best direction for his career, Owens knows the importance a series of podium finishes at the Nürburgring could have on his plans.

## Kent just fail to force win

KENT'S cricketers were denied victory over Hampshire by a combination of bad weather and two last-wicket partnerships at Southampton this week.

Kent complied 507 in their first innings, with big centuries from Daniel Bell-Drummond (153) and Sam North-east (128) and then dismissed Hampshire for 351, enforcing the follow-on.

They could, however, have forged a far stronger position but for Hampshire's 10th-wicket stand of 98.

In their second innings the home side stumbled to 233-9 before the last pair saw out 11.4 overs for a draw.

## Open squash at the Wells

**TUNBRIDGE Wells Squash Rackets Club will be holding the first Tunbridge Wells Open squash tournament next month.**

**The tournament, on Friday and Saturday, October 11-12, is being organised by local businessman and TWSRC member Colin Payne, the British Open over-50s champion.**

**If you would like to enter the tournament, visit [wsaworldtour.com](http://wsaworldtour.com) (women) or [psaworldtour.com](http://psaworldtour.com) (men).**

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